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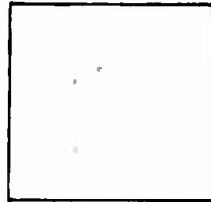
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PRO. SSBN MISSION

THE SSBN-PROTECTION MISSION

PART II FINAL REPORT

SOVIET NAVAL MISSION ASSIGNMENTS

KFR 234-79

KETRON, INC.

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PRO - SSBN MISSION

THE SSBN-PROTECTION MISSION

PART II, FINAL REPORT

SOVIET NAVAL MISSION ASSIGNMENTS

KFR 234-79

13 JULY 1979

ONR Contract N00014-77-C-0708

Prepared by:

Dr. Robert Waring Herrick
Commander, U.S. Navy (Retired)

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Assistant Director for Net
Assessment (OP-090N)
Navy Program Planning Office
The Pentagon, Room 4A686
Washington, D.C. 20350

Attn: Mr. E. L. Woisard

Submitted by:

Ketron, Inc.
1400 Wilson Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22209

Attn: Mr. Ervin Kapos
Executive Vice
President

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PREFACE

In 1962 U.S. Naval Intelligence described as a "paradoxical" fact that the USSR's "recent emphasis on ASW was directed at an area near the Soviet coasts...which are not likely submarine operating areas...".^{1/} What made Soviet stress on coastal ASW as well as the USSR's large-scale construction of coastal patrol ships seem so inexplicable was that the West did not realize at the time that the same traditional Soviet emphasis on coastal defense that still leads them to maintain coastal artillery (and now coastal missile batteries) had been supplemented by the early '60s by recognition of the fact that a much improved coastal ASW capability would be required in order to protect their ballistic missile submarines against U.S./NATO ASW.

Without far better coastal ASW capabilities, both the older Yankee Class and the new Soviet Delta-Class SSBNs that are still building but already constitute the least vulnerable part of the USSR's seaborne nuclear deterrent could be ambushed by "enemy" SSNs in wartime as they left or returned to port or they could be detected as they left port in peacetime and constantly trailed and, in the event of hostilities, sunk before they could launch their missiles. Since the USSR never attempted to maintain a large share of their ballistic missile submarines on station as does the U.S. but instead has opted to retain a large plurality in port most of the time until and unless the outbreak of war appears imminent, the USSR obviously had a much greater requirement for protecting its SSBNs than did the U.S.

^{1/}Office of Naval Intelligence Review, February 1962, p. 49 (Declassified). The full quotation merits noting: "The recent emphasis on ASW is also (like the naval construction program /e.g., the Osa and Komar classes of coastal missile patrol boats/ directed at an area near the Soviet coasts, rather than the control of the sea concept so basic to the U.S. Navy. Continued Soviet efforts against waters which are not likely submarine operating areas can only be described as paradoxical."

This study is intended to present the evidence available from Soviet naval and military writings of the existence in the Soviet naval mission structure of a second new nuclear-era mission along with strategic strike by SSBNs: that for protection of these SSBNs while out of port. Note will be taken of indications of the importance attributed to this mission by Soviet military and naval writers as well as the implications for the relative priority accorded to SSBN-protection with respect to the other most significant Soviet naval missions.

The initial look at each of the missions taken in preparation of the proposal for this project suggested that the SSBN-protection mission would be either No. 1 in importance or almost certainly among the top three. Once all of the remaining seven studies of the ten possible Soviet naval missions for a general nuclear war have been completed, it should prove possible to list the SSBN-protection mission with some confidence in priority order with regard to the other nine missions.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study concludes most importantly that the SSBN-protection mission was added officially to the Soviet Navy's mission structure for any general war as early as January 1960 (and no later than May 1962) and that it remains in force at present. Also, the available evidence indicates that this mission is a very close second, if not a virtual coequal, to the anti-SSBN mission in enjoying a high priority call on the allocation of naval forces to the various general-war missions.^{1/}

An additional conclusion of considerable note is that in 1963-65 and again in 1973-75 the Navy, spearheaded by Gorshkov, conducted intense public lobbying campaigns to win Party approval over the opposition of the Army marshals for the much larger naval construction programs for general purpose naval forces which the Navy deemed essential if it were to safeguard the Soviet SSBNs with reasonable effectiveness in a war against NATO.

^{1/} From the initial study in this series on the ten possible Soviet naval missions for a general nuclear war it was learned that Soviet SSBNs still have not been assigned a major share with the Strategic Missile Forces (SMF) in the possibly decisive initial deep strike against the continental United States but rather are to be withheld as a reserve, back-up force in the event the SMF is unable to destroy all of its assigned targets. A corollary to this quasi-underemployment of Soviet SSBNs was seen to be a rather paradoxical situation in which strategic strike by the SSBNs does not hold the top priority that it otherwise logically might be expected to hold in the Soviet naval mission structure but rather follows after not only the anti-SSBN mission but also SSBN protection, the very mission designed to insure that the SSBNs survive the initial nuclear exchange to be available, should they be required, to back up the SMF.

The Navy's portrayal of the open-ocean patrol areas of Soviet SSBNs as being only "weakly defended" and its misrepresentation of the U.S. Navy's CVAs as being largely engaged in protecting our own SSBNs was interpreted in this study as an effort to win approval for building air-capable ships that would be remarkably similar to our attack aircraft carriers, although claimed to be intended primarily for providing an open-ocean capability to conduct pro-SSBN ASW in the face of NATO opposition (i.e., including that from CVAs). It was noted that Gorshkov, as an old surface sailor, could scarcely be unmindful of the multi-mission capabilities that such air-capable ships with high-performance fighter aircraft would provide the Soviet Navy.

Finally, it was concluded that the Soviet Navy's nuclear-powered attack submarines, despite their potentially great capabilities for pro-SSBN ASW, still appear not to have been integrated tactically into the Navy's aircraft-surface ship ASW effort. This appears to be the case despite the fact that senior Soviet naval officers repeatedly have claimed in print that the U.S. Navy sets great store in using SSNs for ASW.

The methodology employed to reach the foregoing conclusions has consisted of examining all of the available Soviet military and naval writings since the death of Stalin in 1953 and of analyzing all of the portions of those writings of possible relevance to the SSBN-protection mission. This involved several hundred journal and newspaper articles, books, monographs, speeches, and radio and TV broadcasts. Available issues of Military Thought, the formerly classified professional journal of the Armed Forces' General Staff, were used in addition to the open-media sources and provided some valuable insights. To make the analysis of the substantial body of relevant data more manageable and its presentation more comprehensible for the reader, this study was divided into three periods of roughly

equal length, the first coinciding with the fall of Khrushchev and the second with the key XXIVth Party Congress at the approximate mid-point of Brezhnev's tenure in power.

Summaries of the evidence for each of these three periods have been added to the end of each of the chapters so that anyone concerned primarily with the findings rather than the detailed evidence may turn directly to the three fairly brief summaries which begin, respectively, on pages 17, 30, and 55.

I. THE PRO-SSBN ASW MISSION IN THE KHRUSHCHEV ERA

In retrospect, an article that appeared in the Soviet Navy's professional journal Naval Digest in December 1961 provided an in-depth indication of the then-current concern on the part of the Soviet Navy with obtaining from the Soviet Party and government the large number of modern ASW forces required to provide protection to the USSR's "strategic" submarines. This applied not only to the first generation Soviet ballistic missile submarines of the diesel-powered Golf Class, the first of about 29 units of which had been in operation since 1958, but also to the first nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines, those of the Hotel Class, the first of nine units of which had come into operation earlier in 1961. This article merits close scrutiny as the earliest available piece of extensive evidence of Soviet naval interest in the SSBN-protection mission.^{1/}

The article was unambiguously titled "Protection for the Deployment of Submarines in the Course of Military Action."^{2/}

^{1/}The Naval Digest, by far the best source of such information, has not been released by the Soviet censors for the post-war period up through 1960 and no copies covering the second half of the '50s, when earlier interest in protection of ballistic missile submarines could have been published, have yet reached the non-Communist world. However, the fact that no such indications are to be found in Red Star, Communist of the Armed Forces, the Military-Historical Journal or other military publications makes it quite likely that the Stepanov article was in fact the first published evidence of such interest.

^{2/}Captain First Rank M. E. Stepanov, Dotsent, "Obespecheniye razvertivaniya podvodnykh lodok v khode voyennykh deystvii", Morskoi sbornik No. 12, December 1961, pp. 39-48.

It was signed by an active-duty Navy Captain First Rank serving as an assistant professor, quite likely at the Naval War College from where much of such advanced thinking emanates.

Essentially an elaborate justification for more and better ASW forces to provide "combat stability" to Soviet missile submarines, the article drew extensively on the cumulative ASW experience of both world wars to make almost every imaginable argument in historical-surrogate form to justify very greatly expanded and improved ASW forces. In the course of ten pages, the author managed to introduce no less than 14 such surrogate arguments, some of them almost transparently obvious. Since they provide a great deal of insight into Soviet naval thinking on the problems involved in giving wartime protection to Soviet SSBNs in general and, particularly, to the Yankee Class, each of these 14 justifications for enhanced ASW capabilities is summarized briefly in the following sub-paragraphs:

1. As the results of World War II strategic bombing surveys show, the U.S. cannot expect to destroy any Soviet SSBNs at their bases so is forced to build large ASW forces for that purpose. In his zeal to use this point to support the case for bigger, better Soviet ASW forces for SSBN protection, the author simply ignores the difference that nuclear weapons may be expected to make (p. 38);
2. "Foreign specialists" are asserted to agree on the priority "importance of attacking submarines while they are deploying from their bases to the regions of combat activity", which, "naturally" evoked "an interest in protection of submarine deployment" (p. 38);
3. The experience of both world wars is claimed to testify to the importance of protecting submarine deployments. In World War I, the article asserts, the basic method used successfully by the Anglo-French forces to prevent Austro-German submarines from reaching the Mediterranean to attack the Allied SLOC was that of "preventing the egress of the enemies' submarines from their bases"

(p. 44). In World War II, the western allies gave "special attention to the establishment of deeply-echeloned ASW zones" (p. 44). The result was that more than half of all German submarines sunk in that war were detected and destroyed during their deployment and return to base" (pp. 38-39);

4. World War II showed that success in protecting submarine deployments depended to "a large extent" on the on-the-scene "presence of forces capable of being used against the ASW forces opposing the transits" (p. 41);
5. In the period between World Wars I and II, Germany overrated its "strategic position" and so failed to pay sufficient attention to developing the requisite forces for protecting submarines while deploying (p. 41);
6. With the increase in the "front" or "zone of basing" enjoyed by German naval forces after the overrunning of Western Europe and Scandinavia had made Atlantic naval bases available for the submarine campaign against Allied shipping, the requirements for naval forces, especially for aircraft and surface ships, to protect deploying submarines increased greatly -- and just at the wrong time when the numbers of such forces was being significantly decreased by war losses (p. 42);
7. Germany was said to have been relatively well off in World War II as regards its mine-sweeping capability to insure safe sortie and return of its submarines through blockading minefields in comparison with the other ASW forces available to support submarine deployments. The rather gratuitous and out-of-context nature of this observation suggests that attention was being called to the fact that Soviet submarine, aviation, and other surface ASW forces besides the minesweeps were not up to par with the minesweeping force in their numbers and modernity and the Party leaders and Ground Forces' marshals that dominate the Defense Ministry were being urged to expand and improve those forces to have adequately large and capable balanced forces ready in the event of war to enable the Navy to provide protection for their SSBNs during their deployments (p. 42);

8. The alleged failure of the "capitalist" naval powers between wars to build adequate ASW forces to enable them to protect their submarines during deployment was due to their leaders' failure "to correctly evaluate the significance of submarines for combat at sea" (p. 42);
9. Germany's failure to foresee the rapid buildup of ASW forces by Great Britain and the U.S. once the U-boat anti-SLOC campaign had been initiated and to have available enough naval forces not just for point defense of the U-boats but for destroying the burgeoning ASW fleets of the enemy (i.e., in a strategic offensive specifically targeted against ASW forces wherever they were to be found, in port or at sea) "seriously handicapped" the deployment of the U-boats out into the open Atlantic (p. 42);
10. It is not sufficient, the article maintained, merely to escort one's submarines safely out of their bases. As World War I was stated to have shown, it also was necessary to escort them until they reached the relative safety of the open ocean. This was shown by World War I to be particularly true, the author opined in a masterly but perhaps heuristically useful statement of the obvious, "in regions of intense ASW activity by the enemy". Although the author did not say so at this juncture, it was clear from the context that the primary concern with "regions of intense ASW activity" was for ASW barriers (p. 45);
11. Sufficient naval forces of all useful types are required to destroy enemy ASW forces in position at any given time to oppose a "breakthrough" of one's own submarines for running a blockade or penetrating an ASW barrier. This requirement for adequate ASW force levels was first demonstrated in World War I, according to the Stepanov article, when "the action of the Austrian Navy in supporting the breakthrough by German submarines of the Otranto Barrier /across the Adriatic Sea where it opens into the Mediterranean/ consisted of the periodic destruction of the Anglo-Franco-Italian ASW forces. Immediately before the breakthrough or during the breakthrough the Germans normally increased the operations of their supporting forces" (p. 45).

12. The account of the Austrian Navy supporting its submarines in "breakthrough" of the Otranto Barrier, as summarized in the preceding paragraph, was extended to describe what, on the face of it, appeared to be simply an interesting tactic with obvious contemporary relevance. The article related that the Austrian Navy initially only provided close escort for the deploying German submarines. However, this soon resulted in revealing the position of the deploying U-boats to the "Anglo-Franco-Italian ASW forces" and the former were brought under attack. To avoid betraying the location of the German submarines with such certainty during the "breakthrough", the Austrian Navy undertook to "operate on a broad front" in several other areas of the barrier (p. 45). Although the implication of this tactic as multiplying the requirements for ASW forces by the number of diversionary "breakthroughs" carried out was not made explicit by the author, presumably they were quite clear to the Party and military decision-makers for whom this Navy advocacy of more and better ASW forces was intended.
13. Success in effecting the "breakthrough" of an enemy ASW barrier at any given time in a war depends considerably on the status of the rapidly changing seesaw technological competition between developments in submarine warfare on the one hand and those in ASW on the other. The article describes the shifting tides of technological fortune of the German U-boats in World War II as they attempted the "breakthrough" of the Bay of Biscay ASW Barrier (blockade) from the captured French naval bases where the Germans had based their main submarine forces for the Atlantic anti-SLOC campaign. This included the introduction of airborne RDF against surfaced U-boats and the German counter by equipping their submarines with snorkel. The reader of the full account of this technological battle is left with the strong impression that the necessity was being advocated for investing heavily in R&D and new construction of not only more advanced missile and torpedo attack submarines (e.g., with better sonar and greater quietness, speed and submergence depths) but also of escorting submarine, air, and surface forces with improved AAW, ASUW, and ASW capabilities) (p. 47); and

14. "Reliable protection" of deploying submarines, the author states in summary in the final paragraph of the article, is to be achieved only at the price of developing "heterogeneous forces" (i.e., submarine, air, and surface ships) that are constantly and promptly modernized with the latest developments in ASW. Only in this way can the Soviet Navy dispose of the forces capable of "systematically combating the ASW forces of the enemy" as he tries to counter Soviet plans for protecting the USSR's SSBNs (p. 48).

The Stepanov article also included a half dozen additional points of contemporary relevance for SSBN protection:

1. World War II saw the much wider use of mobile forces and ASW means, primarily aircraft and surface ships, rather than the positional means (mainly mines and station-keeping ships) that had been predominant in World War I. This increased use of mobile forces had the result, it was observed in the article, of increasing the ASW "zone of control" and, consequently, of the distance that the submarines had to cover at the reduced submerged speed of diesel submarines running on battery power. This had at least doubled the time that the German submarines were exposed to ASW detection and attack by Allied ASW forces. As a result, the author emphasized by repeating a point made twice in the article, the "basic share" (i.e., the majority) of German U-boats sunk in World War II were detected and successfully attacked during their deployment to the open ocean (p. 44).
2. The success of "modernized" ASW barriers by the end of World War I was attributed by the author to the fact that the barriers were echeloned to a depth greater than that which the German U-boats could cover submerged without having to surface to recharge their batteries. What was not made explicit but must be considered one of the major advantages accrued by the USSR by the application of nuclear propulsion to submarines is that nuclear-powered submarines, unlike their diesel-driven predecessors, are no longer subject to blockade solely by being forced to surface to recharge their batteries and so easily detected and destroyed (p. 44).

3. The egress of submarines from their bases was opposed in both world wars mainly by the laying of mine barriers. In the First World War mine barriers laid off enemy submarine bases alone accounted for 25 percent of all German U-boats sunk. The importance of sweeping a path for submarines leaving and returning to port explains why minesweepers are included in the composition of forces supporting submarine deployments. The two basic methods for the protection of a submarine leaving or returning to port are:

- (1) "The systematic sweeping of mines" and
- (2) "The systematic search for enemy submarines in the Offshore Zone" (p. 45).

Obviously, it is to be able to apply this second method that the USSR maintains the unprecedentedly great coastal ASW forces that the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence found so puzzling just two months after the Stepanov article was written (see Preface).

4. There is a close relationship, of course, between the Soviet naval missions for coastal SLOC protection and SSBN protection in that the same coastal ASW forces can and are used for both as circumstances make expedient. The Stepanov article makes the interesting and relevant point that the daily ASW patrol activity incident to SLOC protection can be exploited to mask submarine deployments from their bases out of coastal waters (p. 45).
5. In World War II, the German Naval Command did what little it was able to do in the way of providing protection to its submarines during the deployment phase. One of the reasons that this effort was wholly inadequate, according to Stepanov, was that even those aircraft which were not commandeered for fighting on the ground fronts were not under the Navy's command and requests for air support were either honored in the breach or too slowly (p. 46). Since the Soviet Long-range Air Force (LRAF) is charged with providing some long-range reconnaissance and strike support to the Soviet Navy, it may be that this observation was a veiled criticism of the LRAF for providing only grudging and limited support of this kind. This point is of particular

note for, as shall be detailed in due course, both Admiral Gorshkov and his leading theoretician, Rear Admiral Stalbo, writing a decade later, chose to rewrite this bit of history to claim that the Germans made no efforts to provide support for their deploying submarines.

That Navy advocacy (such as indicated by Stepanov's December 1961 article) of more ASW forces, at least of more surface ASW ships, had not fallen on completely deaf ears among the Ground Force officers of the Defense Ministry and General Staff became manifest less than a year later with the appearance of the first of the three editions of Military Strategy. Edited by the long-time Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Marshal Sokolovskiy, and written by a "collective" of General Staff officers, the 1962 edition took limited cognizance in two ways of the Navy's plea for more surface ASW ships.

First, it acknowledged the alleged fact that the "greatest war preparations" being taken by the United States and Great Britain were those in the field of ASW and conceded vaguely (in comparison to the detail with which most subjects of comparable importance were treated) that "this would have to be taken into account."^{1/} Secondly, it concluded with equal vagueness that "a certain number of surface ships are necessary to protect the operations of submarines and for carrying out second priority missions such as the defense of sea communications and cooperation with the Ground Forces in the operations in coastal directions".^{2/} Military Strategy stated, with obvious

^{1/} Voyennaya strategiya, V. D. Sokolovskiy (Ed.), Moscow: Military Press of the Ministry of Defense, p. 313. The first edition was sent to the printers for typesetting (and subsequent censorship) on 12 March 1962 and was signed to the press for publication on 24 May 1962.

^{2/} Ibid., p. 276. This appears, with minor translation differences, on p. 254 of Harriet Fast Scott's translation and line-by-line comparison of the three editions (1962, 1963, and 1968) of Military Strategy (Crane, Russak and Company, 1968 (henceforth referred to as "HFS")).

reference to submarines since they are considered the Soviet Navy's "main striking force":

In order to afford protection to naval combat operations, it is necessary to have sufficient reconnaissance and anti-submarine aircraft and also special anti-submarine and air defense ships, radar patrol ships, minesweepers, etc.

The Navy's dissatisfaction at being put off in such fashion was not long in finding its reflection in print. The January 1963 issue of Naval Digest contained a review of Military Strategy by a former wartime Chief of Main Staff, Admiral Alafuzov. Writing from the relatively safe retreat of retirement, the outspoken admiral bluntly stated the Navy's disappointment on the score of its patent need for more ASW surface ships. Military Strategy's statement that "a certain number" of surface ships would be required to support submarine operations was characterized, with seeming bitterness, as "too vague" and "of little use". He charged the General Staff officers and Marshal Sokolovskiy with having been inconsistent with what they had earlier indicated -- a likely reference to the first statement from Military Strategy mentioned above that account would be taken of the fact that the U.S. and U.K. allegedly were making their "greatest war preparations" in ASW.

It should be noted at this juncture that it seems most unlikely that a General Staff-authored publication by any stretch of the imagination would have conceded that the Navy had a requirement for even "a certain number of surface ships" to "protect the operations of submarines" and also "sufficient reconnaissance and antisubmarine aircraft" to "afford protection to naval combat operations" (a euphemism for submarine operations, as noted above) unless the Navy had been formally assigned the mission of protecting the USSR's seaborne nuclear deterrent force. Accordingly, the further evidence available on this subject will be tested against the hypothesis that,

as of the appearance of the first edition of Military Strategy in 1962, the Soviet Navy had been assigned the pro-SSBN mission for carrying out in the event of a general war, nuclear or conventional. In this connection it merits mention that the same sentence in Military Strategy that publicly validated the Navy's requirement for "a certain number of surface ships" to "protect the operations of submarines" continued directly to indicate that for the Navy's surface ships at least the pro-SSBN mission was primary and the SLOC-protection mission and the Army flank-support missions were secondary. The sentence read in full:

A certain number of surface ships are necessary to protect the operations of submarines and to carry out secondary missions such as the protection of the sea lines of communication and coordination with the Ground Forces' operations in coastal regions.

Since this statement does not mention the conceivably higher priority missions of strategic strike, anti-SSBN, anti-CVA, and anti-SLOC and since it speaks only of the priority roles for surface ships, nothing specific can be deduced from it alone with regard to the standing of the pro-SSBN mission in the Soviet Navy's overall mission structure. Nevertheless, from what was said and from the intrinsic importance of protecting the perhaps least vulnerable part of the USSR's strategic deterrence and strike forces, it seems reasonable to conclude at this stage that the priority accorded to pro-SSBN as early as in 1962 was relatively high.

Although the second edition of Military Strategy, which appeared in 1963, stated in its Preface that the authors had taken note of the many comments and suggestions for changes to the work and had made changes as they found appropriate, the Navy's was given no satisfaction with regard to Admiral Alafuzov's criticism of the first edition's vague and unhelpful formulation that "a certain number of surface ships" and a "sufficient" number of reconnaissance and ASW aircraft would be

required to enable the Navy "to protect the operations of submarines". Rather, this offending remark was published unchanged in the second edition.^{1/} That this constituted an intentional rebuff to the Navy on this matter seems virtually certain considering the fact that the Navy had chosen to have one of its most respected elder "statemen" criticize the authors of Military Strategy so vitriolically and in such a prominent military journal as the Naval Digest.

Consequently, it may have been under the sting of this obvious rebuke that Admiral Gorshkov decided in 1963 to take up the cudgel for the cause of obtaining more ASW surface ships for the Navy. He "went public" on the issue first on 19 May 1963 in the newspaper Izvestiya, the official house organ of the government, including the Ministry of Defense, but abstained from raising the issue in his annual Navy Day article in Pravda in late July. This should have made it pointedly clear that his differences over the matter were with the marshals and not the Party leaders.

In his Izvestiya article, the Navy Commander-in-Chief made three points that lend themselves to the interpretation that he was taking up where the Stepanov article in the December 1961 issue of the Naval Digest had left off in presenting the Navy's case for being provided more surface ships for pro-SSBN ASW. Gorshkov switched to a current foreign-navy surrogate from the historical-surrogate form that the Stepanov article had employed, which made his arguments even more obviously applicable to the Soviet Navy's policy interests of the moment despite being sufficiently

^{1/} Voennaya strategiya, Marshal V. D. Sokolovskiy (Ed.) 2nd edition, Moscow: Military Press of the Ministry of Defense, p. 313 (HFS, p. 254). This edition was sent to the typesetters on 18 April 1963 and signed to the press on 30 August 1963.

esoteric to pass the censors. The three pertinent points made by the Navy chief, among a number of other policy axes he had to grind, and the relevant interpretations are as follows:

- (1) U.S. SSBNs were asserted to be vulnerable to ASW. Since U.S. and British ASW was widely known to be far ahead of that of the USSR, the assertion that the U.S. SSBNs were vulnerable carried the implication that Soviet SSBNs must be even more vulnerable and hence in need of substantial support by other naval forces to ensure their "combat stability";
- (2) The ASW state-of-the-art with dialectical inevitability will catch up with and surpass that of submarine developments. This was the Navy chief's resourceful way of getting around the fact that it would have left him wide open to criticism as weakening the USSR's deterrent image had he been so injudicious as to come right out and state that Soviet SSBNs were much more vulnerable than those of the U.S. So he skinned that particular cat by invoking the Marxist dialectic to good effect. He concluded his remarks on this point with a dig at the Army marshals who, since Stalin's day and beginning with Marshal Zhukov, had always favored submarines (and aircraft) over large surface ships, now and again hailing the former as the "universal" naval weapon and far less frequently but more honestly noting their relatively less costly price tags. Gorshkov observed, with what to the marshals must have sounded like a particularly snide preachment since he cited "military" history which the marshal would normally be credited with knowing backwards and forwards: "Hundreds of years of the experience of military history teaches that no weapon is capable, no matter how perfected it may be, of carrying out all of the missions in war". To this injury, Gorshkov added the insult of departing from his normal practice of giving standard guard-of-the-sea-borders-of-the-Homeland type titles to his published articles and assigning the pointed title of "Short-sighted Strategy".

That this was meant to describe the marshals must have been abundantly clear to all those concerned with the issue in Party and government circles, particularly since it did not seem particularly applicable to U.S. strategy as Gorshkov described it. This was a remarkably public venting of the spleen for the normally politic Navy chief -- perhaps in itself an indication of the great importance Gorshkov and his top staff admirals accorded to the matter of being provided with enough ASW surface ships to be able to at least give "the old school try" to protecting Soviet SSBNs in the event of a general war;

- (3) The U.S. was said to have stepped up its production of nuclear-powered ASW submarines in 1962 from three to eight per year. To the extent that attack submarines were known to be considered by the U.S. as by far the single most effective type of naval force for ASW and to the commensurate extent that this affected the USSR's programmed levels of construction of ASW surface ships for the next five-year plan (to start in 1966), the Navy would have had a sufficient basis for calling for a corresponding increase in the construction of ASW forces, including surface ships, up to as much as the 267 percent increase represented by the reported increase in US SSN construction from three to eight per annum.

The second article that Gorshkov published in 1963 that gave attention to the Navy's need for more ASW ships for the pro-SSBN mission appeared in a lengthy article giving his views on the major policy issues of concern to the Navy which he published in the Naval Digest in July. He made two major points of significance for the SSBN-protection mission:

- (1) Submarines and long-range strike aircraft were not enough for the Navy to carry out its assigned missions. The Navy also required surface missile and ASW ships and minesweepers (obviously for SSBN protection); and

- (2) The Navy "is now assigned to carrying out primarily offensive missions at great distances from our coast and close to the coasts of any aggressors".^{1/}

The first point above requires no elaboration beyond giving the relevant quote in full -- which is done in footnote 1 below. The second point does require clarification. At first reading Gorshkov seems to be saying that the strategic strike mission of the Navy's SSBNs is "primary". Given such a reading, one would logically conclude that all other missions, including pro-SSBN are secondary. However, on closer inspection and with the benefit of the completed SSBN-mission study for background, it can be seen that Gorshkov's statement must be viewed as part deterrence propaganda and part policy advocacy. That is, we know with very considerable assurance from the first study in this series, one on the strategic strike roles of the Navy's SSBNs, that the Navy in the 1960s had only a reserve, standby role in deep strategic strike in the event that the Strategic Missile Forces (SMF) were unable to destroy all of their assigned targets and that, at the most, the Navy's SSBNs were only assigned to strike those continental U.S. naval bases in which SSBNs or CVAs could be caught by surprise at the very outset of a war. Moreover, the wording of Gorshkov's statement appears to have been designed to give the impression (for deterrence purposes almost certainly) that the Navy's primary

^{1/}Modern submarine and missile aviation now comprise the basic strike forces of our Navy...But in order that the Navy be in shape to carry out its missions, it must also have, in addition to these basic strike forces of long-range action, the other forces required both for combat with any enemy within the limits of the defended zone of a naval theater and for the all-round support of the combat and operational activity of the basic strike forces of the Navy. Included in such forces are surface missile ships and craft and ships and aviation designated for combat with submarines, minesweepers, warships and merchant ships of special designation /i.e., large air-capable ships and landing ships are so designated/, coastal missile units, etc.". (S. G. Gorshkov, "Zabota partii o flote" /Concern of the Party for the Navy/, Morskoi sbornik No. 7, July 1963, p. 16.) Gorshkov, judging from both the contents and title of the article, appeared to be appealing to the Party to intercede with the Defense Ministry on behalf of the Navy's need for more pro-SSBN forces.

mission was sharing with the SMF in the initial nuclear exchange but without actually saying so. That is, Gorshkov does not say that the Navy's "primary" missions are offensive ones off the enemy's coasts (i.e., SSBN strike); rather he only says that the Navy is assigned to carry out missions close to an enemy's coasts which are "primarily offensive". Consequently, he really is excluding altogether consideration of any of the other Soviet naval missions since they are not carried out close to U.S. shores. Gorshkov's wording here is tricky and misleading, almost certainly deliberately so.

This 19 May 1963 Izvestiya article of Gorshkov's appeared again with only minor changes in 1964 in a book The Nuclear Era and War published by Izvestiya Press that consisted of articles by Defense Minister Malinovskiy and each of the military service commanders-in-chief.^{1/} Since the parts described above that related to the pro-SSBN mission were repeated verbatim, it is only necessary to note the fact of the reappearance a year later of the same advocacy by the Navy head of more ASW ships and the surface missile ships and craft to protect them while they, in turn, protected the Soviet SSBNs from U.S. SSNs.

It will be recalled that the 1962 first edition of Military Strategy had stated that SSBN protection was the "basic" mission of Soviet surface ships and had mentioned the anti-SLOC and Army flank-support missions as "secondary". This statement had been repeated in the second edition of the Sokolovskiy work in 1963.^{2/}

^{1/} Yadernyi vek i voyna, Moscow, Izvestiya Press, 1964, The chapter by Gorshkov appeared on pages 60-69. This book was released for printing on 15 July 1964.

^{2/} Voyennaya strategiya, V. D. Sokolovskiy (Ed.), 2nd edition, 1963, p. 313. HFS, p. 254.

In July 1964 the Naval Digest in an unsigned editorial for Navy Day, "The Mighty Navy of the Socialist Power" reaffirmed the primacy of the pro-SSBN mission for surface ships and supplied the additional information that, for surface ships (not for the Navy as a whole be it noted), the pro-SSBN mission took precedence over defense of the USSR against seaborne strikes.^{1/} Even though this statement did not apply to the Navy's mission structure as a whole but just to surface ships, the very fact that any component of the Navy would be said to have a mission higher than the normal first priority assigned to, in effect, "the defense of the Homeland against assault from sea and oceanic directions" speaks volumes for the great importance accorded in Soviet military thinking and planning to the SSBN-protection mission. Since defense-versus-seaborne strike in Soviet usage includes the anti-SSBN, anti-CVA, and Army flank cover and support missions, the probably Party-written (and certainly Party reviewed and approved) 1964 Navy Day editorial in the Naval Digest affirmed, and in more detail than Military Strategy, that SSBN protection was the first priority mission for both Soviet ASW and missile ships and craft.

In the same July 1964 issue of Naval Digest in which the Navy Day editorial just discussed appeared, there was also an article by a Captain First Rank entitled "Questions of the Employment of Nuclear-powered Missile Submarines" that included the following remark which seemed to imply that the Navy should

^{1/} "Together with submarines and aviation, we are building surface ships equipped with missiles and various combat and technological equipment. The new ships are capable of carrying out the combat missions assigned them: supporting the operations of submarines, insuring the destruction of enemy submarines and surface warships, and the defense of our own coasts against strikes from the sea." ("Moguchiy flot sotsialisticheskoi derzhavy", Morskoi sbornik No. 7, July 1964, p. 6.) It should be noted that the second mission listed above, that for "insuring the destruction of enemy submarines and surface warships" reads in context as an essential corollary of the first even though it embraces the traditional mission for any navy of destroying the naval forces of the enemy.

be allowed to develop a new nuclear-powered torpedo attack submarine with better capabilities for protecting Soviet SSBNs from enemy SSNs. Resorting to the much-used Soviet device of a foreign-navy surrogate to express what could not be stated openly and still pass censorship, the article stated: "With the aim of protecting the operation of their missile submarines, the Americans do not exclude supporting their operation with nuclear-powered antisubmarine submarines".^{1/}

The curious phrasing "do not exclude" was alone enough to call attention to this sentence and the fact that the U.S. had never felt the need for SSN escorts (in view of the USSR's virtual lack of any oceanic ASW capability for detecting SSBNs in the open ocean) made it patently obvious that the author was, in fact, using U.S. SSBNs as a surrogate to esoterically discuss Soviet requirements for such SSN escorts for their SSBNs. In view of the United States' very substantial oceanic ASW capability, including that contributed by the SOSUS systems (about which the Soviets have written frequently and in great detail), it does not seem at all surprising that the Soviet Navy should want quieter, faster, and deeper-running SSNs with better sonar than they were known to have in 1964 when the article under discussion was published.

In the concluding paragraphs of this first chapter, the evidence that has been presented above on the pro-SSBN mission is summarized with such interpretive comment added as appropriate. Finally, the priority of the pro-SSBN mission is assessed as of the overthrow of Khrushchev in October 1964 and the beginning of the Brezhnev era.

Although by 1961 the USSR had been operating diesel-driven Golf Class ballistic-missile submarines for at least three years,

^{1/}Captain First Rank V. P. Pavlov, "Voprosy ispol'zovaniya atomnykh raketnykh lodok", Morskoi sbornik No. 7, July 1964, p. 81.

it was not until shortly after the appearance earlier in 1961 of the first unit of the nuclear-powered Hotel Class SSBN that any reflection of the USSR's interest in providing protection for the country's only seaborne platform for strategic missiles was mirrored in the Soviet open literature. When such a reflection did appear, however, it was a clear one in which many details of continued relevance could be discerned.

The seminal article for pro-SSBN in the December 1961 Naval Digest by a Captain First Rank Stepanov was remarkably straightforward, even to its unambiguous title: "Protection for the Deployment of Submarines in the Course of Military Action". In a concerted effort to marshal every possible argument in favor of a larger Soviet ASW effort, the author revealed a great deal about Soviet naval thinking with regard to the requirements for providing "combat stability" to the USSR's strategic submarines. The article showed a painful awareness of global ASW capabilities of the USSR's putative NATO opponent and the consequent need to protect the USSR's SSBNs not only when sortieing or reentering port but in their transits out through the ASW barriers that NATO could be expected to erect across maritime chokepoints such as the Greenland-Iceland-UK "gap" in order to prevent Soviet submarines from gaining access to the open oceans.

In addition to the implicit but convincing evidence of the prior existence of a pro-SSBN mission in the Soviet naval mission structure provided by the Stepanov article, it also was exceptionally informative about the strategy, tactics and forces the Navy considered necessary to carry out the mission with any high degree of success. "Heterogeneous" general purpose naval forces of all of the main types (submarines, aircraft, and surface ships) would be required, Stepanov urged, and in the numbers and modernity that would enable the Navy to overcome the NATO ASW forces that could be used to try to blockade Soviet SSBNs in port or oppose their access to the open oceans by establishing ASW barriers at the natural chokepoints.

Since antisubmarine submarines lying in ambush off SSBN bases were the most potentially effective blockading force, "deeply-echeloned ASW defense zones" around the SSBN bases would be required to provide suitable area defense. Once out of port, SSBNs would have to be provided point defense by aircraft, submarines and surface ships (including minesweepers as well as ships with capabilities for ASW, AAW, and ASUW) until the SSBNs had carried out the "breakthrough" tactic of penetrating the ASW barriers between their bases and the open oceans.

In order not to pinpoint the location of the SSBNs being escorted through NATO ASW barriers by the presence of the surface escort forces, several diversionary surface escort groups would be required to carry out simultaneous barrier crossings at different points to help mask the actual point of penetration. Also, normal daily escort operations for the USSR's coastal shipping could be used to mask the out-of-area movement of Soviet SSBNs.

Additionally, a campaign of strategic scope would be required to attack NATO ASW forces wherever they could be found, including those in port as well as at sea. The Strategic Missile Forces would be required against the forces in port while the LRAF could aid with reconnaissance and strikes against ASW forces both in port and at sea.

The heavy requirements for general purpose naval forces to meet all of the foregoing requirements would be even further increased in wartime as the "basing front" was widened as the USSR conquered Atlantic ports and as the NATO states impressed every seaworthy ship and craft into the ASW forces. Finally, not only must the Navy not be deprived of its aircraft (as in World War II when they were commandeered for the ground fronts) but the LRAF must make its contribution to the ASW effort promptly and completely.

Six months later there appeared the first published, if implicit, acknowledgment by the military that the Navy indeed had justified requirements for more SSBN protection forces. The first edition of Military Strategy, which had been written by the Armed Forces' General Staff and edited by Marshal Sokolovskiy, at least conceded (although grudgingly) that the Navy had legitimate need for "a certain number of surface ships" and "a sufficient number of reconnaissance and ASW aircraft" for "the protection of naval combat operations". This last phrase was a transparent euphemism for SSBN-protection since strategic submarines were repeatedly asserted to be the Navy's main striking forces.

Although the Navy took strong exception to such a vague formulation of its urgent requirements for larger general purpose forces for the pro-SSBN mission, the military consistently refused to go on record supporting the Navy's case and so supplying the Navy with doctrinal ammunition to bombard the Defense Ministry and the Party Politburo with demands for greatly enlarged general purpose forces. Instead, the same vague formulations about "a certain number of surface ships" and "a sufficient number" of aircraft for ASW were to be repeated verbatim in the 1963 (2nd) edition of Military Strategy.

Not content to let the issue ride alone on the strength of Admiral Alafuzov's irate reclama to the first edition of Military Strategy, the Navy Commander-in-Chief entered the lists three months later to tilt for more forces for the SSBN-protection mission. In articles in Izvestiya in May and in the Naval Digest in July 1963, Gorshkov presented the major arguments to support the Navy's case for more general purpose forces. They were virtually all reasons connected with the SSBN-protection mission. The U.S. had increased its annual production of ASW submarines

from three to eight. Obviously, more forces would be required to encounter this increased threat to Soviet SSBNs. Although the technology for submarines had jumped far ahead of that for ASW, the Marxian dialectic could be counted on to operate as it had throughout history so that ASW would gain the ascendancy again. Gorshkov implied that the USSR should ride this dialectical horse to victory by investing enough in ASW R&D to insure a technological breakthrough. Most indicative of Gorshkov's all-out effort to carry the day against the probable opposition of the Defense Ministry marshals was that he resorted even to insinuating that Soviet SSBNs were quite vulnerable (and so required more supporting forces, of course) and he slammed the marshals as "short-sighted".

Thus, during the Khrushchev period there was evidence from both the naval and the military sides of the house that the Navy had been assigned a mission for protection of Soviet SSBNs. For the Navy, Captain Stepanov and Admirals Alafuzov and Gorshkov made it clear that the Navy was anything but satisfied with the general purpose forces it had received or had in prospect for the pro-SSBN mission. The very facts of the unusually direct nature of the Stepanov article, the uncontrolled irrascibility of Alafuzov's review of Military Strategy, and Gorshkov's political audacity in both implying that the USSR's seaborne nuclear deterrent actually was vulnerable and in appealing over the head of his "short-sighted" peers in the Defense Ministry to the Party leaders in the Kremlin all testify more convincingly than any direct statements to that effect could do that the Navy, beyond any reasonable doubt, had been assigned the pro-SSBN mission, at the latest by the time the first edition of Military Strategy appeared in May 1962.

II. EVIDENCE RE. THE PRO-SSBN MISSION UNDER BREZHNEV

UNTIL 1971

In an article by Admiral Kharlamov that in all likelihood had been written in 1965, since it appeared in the January 1966 issue of Naval Digest, a passing reference was made to the SSBN-protection requirement. Since the context is necessary for understanding the brief pro-SSBN reference, the entire passage in which it was made is quoted below and the pro-SSBN reference has been underlined by the author of this study to identify it clearly:

Carrying out both missions /strategic strike against shore objectives of the enemy and anti-SSBN ASW/ contributes to the same aim -- not to permit nuclear strikes on targets located in the depths of the territory of our country. In this regard, both of the contesting sides will try to create conditions favorable for their strike forces and conditions unfavorable for the enemy.^{1/}

More informatively, there appeared in May 1967 the 2nd edition of a popular history of the Soviet Navy, Combat Course of the Soviet Navy, which contained three points relative to the SSBN-protection mission:

- (1) The possibility of employing diesel-powered submarines for the SSBN-protection mission was at least indirectly suggested by a sentence which stated that the diesel boats could be used for missions for which "it is inexpedient to use the expensive nuclear-powered submarines";^{2/}

^{1/} Admiral N. M. Kharlamov, "Tendentsii razvitiya voyenno-morskikh flotov" (Trends in the Development of Navies), Morskoi sbornik No. 1, January 1966, pp. 32-33.

^{2/} Boyevoi put' Sovetskogo voyenno-morskogo flota, Moscow, Military Press of the Ministry of Defense, 1966, p. 548. This book was sent to the printers on 20 October 1966 but was not released for publication until seven months later, on 25 May 1967.

- (2) By reference to the need for ASW in Soviet coastal waters the pro-SSBN mission probably was implicitly reaffirmed as part of the Soviet naval mission structure for any future general war: "It will be required to search for and destroy enemy submarines in our coastal areas and in regions remote from our shores".^{1/}
- (3) The pro-SSBN mission was listed fourth in a descriptive paragraph on missions which put anti-SSBN, anti-SLOC and Army flank support ahead of the pro-SSBN mission and SLOC protection and the anti-CVA mission after it. The paragraph in question is quoted in full prior to attempting to evaluate it for what it can reveal about the priority standing of the SSBN-protection mission in the Soviet naval mission structure:

Together with 1/ carrying out the mission for combatting the strike forces of the enemy navy and 2/ his shipping in distant sea and oceanic regions employing submarines and naval missile aviation, the Navy in a future war will be required to carry out missions for 3/ cooperation with the Ground Forces in offensive operations in coastal sectors. Additionally, it will be required to 4/ conduct search and destruction of the submarines of the enemy in offshore regions and in ones distant from our shores, 5/ to search for and detonate mines laid by the enemy on our sea lines of communication and otherwise to protect these communications, 6/ to defend our shores against seaborne strikes, and also to carry out various other missions.^{2/}

This listing of missions is not as clearly formulated as most of the many mission listings to be found in the Soviet naval literature in that there is some redundancy, especially with respect to the anti-CVA mission which normally would be considered to be included in both the first mission above, that for "combatting the strike forces of the enemy navy" and in the last one, that for "defending our shores against seaborne strikes".

^{1/} Ibid., p. 548.

^{2/} Ibid., p. 548.

While the analytical choice has been made to list anti-CVA only under the last mission description, since it is the only one to fill the bill, the very fact of such redundancy suggests that the foregoing description of Soviet naval missions given in this history of the Soviet Navy written for popular consumption was compiled more with an eye for creating a favorable impression on the general reader than presenting an officially-approved priority listing of Soviet naval missions. Be that as it may, the possibility must be kept open for further evidence that the pro-SSBN mission stood no higher than fourth in the Navy's mission structure for general war at the time the book was published in 1966.

A June 1967 article in Naval Digest by an active-duty Captain First Rank included an inaccurate description of the threat presumably posed to Soviet submarines by "deeply-echeloned ASW zones" that the U.S. Navy allegedly was maintaining off Soviet submarine bases. The description of the ASW "zones" was a perfect mirror image of Soviet "ASW defense zones". This effort to justify larger pro-SSBN forces to deal with this considerably exaggerated "threat" constituted an unusually transparent use of a falsified foreign-navy surrogate to build a case primarily for larger SSBN-protection forces. The relevant passage is of enough interest to warrant quoting in full:

Before the appearance of nuclear-powered /torpedo attack/ submarines in the composition of the Soviet Navy, the U.S. Navy had been assigned the mission of completely preventing our submarines from reaching the /open/ ocean by destroying them in their bases and at the outset of their deployments. In subsequent years such a requirement was acknowledged to be unrealistic. While not fully giving up the mission of destroying /our/ submarines at their bases and while sortieing from them, the Americans began to saturate with ASW forces and /positional/ means /e.g., ASW mines and SOSUS systems/ deeply-echeloned ASW zones off our coasts and ASW barriers on the probable movement routes of our submarines...^{1/}

^{1/} Captain First Rank K. T. Titov, Candidate of Naval Sciences, "Nekotoriye kriterii razvitiya VMS, SSbA" (Some Criteria of the Development of the U.S. Navy), Morskoi Sbornik No. 6, June 1967, p. 83.

In early 1968 the third and last edition of Military Strategy appeared before the death of Marshal Sokolovskiy removed the editor of all three editions from the scene and reportedly led to the dissolution of the team of General Staff officers who had prepared all three editions. Of note was the fact that the authors still had not seen fit to placate the Navy five years after Admiral Alafuzov had taken such strong exception to the first edition's vague response to the energetic Navy sales campaign to obtain larger and more modern ASW forces on the basis of requirements for carrying out the pro-SSBN mission in wartime.

It will be recalled that the first edition in 1962 had left the Navy chagrined and frustrated by only acknowledging that the Navy had a requirement for "a certain number of surface ships" to "protect the operations of submarines" and that Admiral Alafuzov had vented the Navy's displeasure at what was obviously taken as a cavalier put-off in a January 1963 review of Military Strategy in Naval Digest that had termed the Sokolovskiy work's handling of the problem as "vague" and "of little help". Now in the third edition of the book in 1968 the marshal and his General Staff officers proved as unwilling as they had in the second edition in 1963 to pay heed to the Navy's importunings.^{1/}

In 1967, right at the time the third edition of Military Strategy was signed to the press, there appeared the only explicit opposition to appear in Soviet military writings against the provision of forces for submarine protection. In a book bearing the title V. I. Lenin and the Soviet Armed Forces and written and edited by a Ground Force general, the following passage is to be found: "Submarines possess the greatest self-reliance so additional forces do not have to be provided for

^{1/} Voyennaya strategiya, 3rd edition, V. D. Sokolovskiy (Ed.), Moscow: Military Press of the Ministry of Defense, 1968, p. 307, HFS, p. 254.

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capable ASW SSNs. Chabanenko was critical of the Navy's practice of using surface ASW ships to escort Soviet SSBNs, making the point with unmistakable clarity although resorting to a foreign-navy surrogate to express his differences with the Navy's accepted policy. He argued, in effect, that Gorshkov should give "very serious consideration" to giving up the tactic of escorting deploying SSBNs so as not to betray their presence to enemy ASW forces.^{1/} This unusual, although far from unprecedented, differing of views from what seemed to be accepted Soviet shipbuilding policy and official tactical doctrine actually may have been quite acceptable to Gorshkov, or conceivably even encouraged by him. A possible explanation of this seeming paradox is that, while Gorshkov had always used the submarine-protection requirement to justify the larger general purpose surface forces that are needed by any navy for "a wide range of missions", as Gorshkov often says, he could scarcely have been unaware of the hazard of "fingering" his SSBNs for enemy ASW forces if they were accompanied by surface ships out of the coastal areas and beyond the ASW barriers in the open ocean.

In the concluding substantive paragraph of his preface to Undersea Victory Admiral Chabanenko capped off his portrayal of the U.S. ASW submarine threat by claiming that the U.S. was constantly conducting naval exercises in which numerous SSBNs were "designated the enemy" to be hunted and tracked by "multi-

^{1/}"The American command considers the quality of combat training of submarines to be one of the important components of the development of submarine forces. It is significant that, in the course of combat training, the concealment of missile submarine operations is worked out with special intensity and very serious consideration is accorded to missile submarine operations out of contact with ASW warships which reveal their presence...". Ibid., p. 18.

purpose" ASW submarines.^{1/} It seemed readily apparent from the extent and tenor of these remarks and that Chabanenko had saved them to the position of greatest emphasis at the end of his preface, that his overriding policy concern in writing the preface had been to present the optimum arguments for the USSR to build more and better ASW submarines.

In 1969 and 1970 no mention of the pro-SSBN mission was made by Admiral Gorshkov or any of his top officers, an apparent indication that the construction of ASW forces was proceeding to their satisfaction. However, there were three clues to indicate that the pro-SSBN mission was alive and well in the Soviet naval mission structure.

In early 1969 a DOSAAF monograph, The Soviet Navy appeared in Moscow book stores reaffirming the Navy's requirements for ASW forces, especially for ASW surface ships, airplanes and helicopters.^{2/} "Great importance" was said to be attached "to antisubmarine aircraft and helicopters which are equipped with a rich arsenal of weapons for combatting enemy submarines".^{3/} In addition, The Soviet Navy contained a verbatim repetition of the missions formulation which had appeared three years earlier in Combat Course of the Soviet Navy which, it is recalled, listed fourth the broad ASW mission which would include that for SSBN protection: "The Navy will be required to search for and destroy enemy submarines in coastal areas and in

^{1/}"Annually [the U.S. Navy] conducts a large number of ASW exercises. Multipurpose and missile submarines are widely used in these exercises. The missile submarines are designated the 'enemy'." (Ibid., p. 18.) Worthy of note in passing is that Chabanenko mirror-imaged the Soviet requirements (except perhaps for greater speed) by ascribing the following improvements in ASW submarines as being the characteristics for which U.S. ASW submarine designers allegedly were striving: "decreasing submarine noise, increasing the depth of submergence, developing new material for stronger hulls [titanium?], developing new torpedoes and guided-missile weapons, and modernizing sonar and navigation equipment". Ibid., p. 18.

^{2/}Vice Admiral V. D. Yakovlev, Sovetskiy voenno-morskoi flot, 2nd ed., Moscow: DOSAAF Press, 1969, 96 pages. Signed to press 9 December 1968, p. 72.

^{3/}Ibid., p. 66.

regions remote from our shores".^{1/}

The fairly lengthy evaluation made earlier of this formulation and of the entire missions list in Combat Course of the Soviet Navy will not be repeated again other than to remind the reader that there are enough redundancies and a general lack of clarity in the general ordering of missions to raise legitimate doubt, earlier and again here, as to whether listings in these two popular-consumption presentations were accurate reflections of any official Navy priority listing.

In September 1969 an article by a Captain 2nd Rank in Naval Digest did not even resort to any surrogate form of esoteric expression, although he did invoke the authority of "American specialists", to state the obvious fact that the state-of-the-art in ASW (compared to that of submarine warfare) left much research and development work to be done. His article, which bore the diffident title appropriate to a second-rank captain, was "Some Views on the Employment of ASW Forces of the U.S. Navy", discussed the ASW concerns of the Soviet Navy in what can be fairly described as translucent terms. At the end of the article, the author summarized the situation as follows: "In conclusion, we note that, as acknowledged by American specialists, the ASW problem is far from being solved".^{2/} The proper goal for Soviet ASW force development, the article implied by surrogate use of alleged U.S. Navy thinking, was to have "already in peacetime" for the missions assigned adequate ASW forces that were in place and "functioning normally"^{3/}, i.e., ready to go to war on very short notice.

^{1/} Ibid., p. 67.

^{2/} Captain 2nd Rank E. K. Vasil'yev, "Nekotorye vzglyady na organizatsiyu i ispol'zovaniye protivolodochnykh sil VMS SSHA", Morskoi sbornik No. 9, September 1969, p. 97.

^{3/} Ibid., p. 93.

The third and most interesting of the indications in 1969-70 of the continuance in force of a pro-SSBN mission was an April 1970 report from the global Soviet naval exercise OKEAN-'70 by an Izvestiya correspondent covering the exercises. In the "vignette" style of reporting used on such occasions, the item by correspondent Val Goltsev read in part:

Today the Navy went out on the big "Okean" maneuvers. As always, the first to leave their homeports were the ASW ships and the fleet mine-sweepers. They have already been several days at sea and are reliably "ploughing the waves", clearing a path for the cruisers, destroyers, missile ships, and submarines. In sailors parlance, this operation is called a "breakthrough".^{1/}

Although the fact was not made explicit in this account, use of the term "breakthrough" made it readily apparent that the "cruisers, destroyers [and] missile ships" mentioned all were engaged in protecting the last-listed "submarines" to penetrate the ASW barrier(s) that would be expected in wartime to bloc the egress of Soviet SSBNs and other submarines into the open oceans.

To summarize pro-SSBN developments in the first half of the Brezhnev era from the fall of Khrushchev up to the 24th Party Congress in March 1971, there were a substantial number of discrete pieces of evidence from the naval writings alone that seemed to warrant the conclusion that the mission for protection of the USSR's strategic submarines remained very much a part of the naval mission structure. Convincing evidence was lacking, however, to determine the priority standing of the pro-SSBN mission.

From the military side, the plaintive but muffled voice of the Army turtle was heard in 1967 protesting that Soviet SSBNs really shouldn't require any forces for their protection since they are essentially invulnerable. More authoritatively, however,

^{1/} Izvestiya, 19 April 1970, p. 5.

the final edition of Military Strategy in 1968 reaffirmed the doctrinal position of the Armed Forces' General Staff first set forth in the 1962 and 1963 editions that the Navy did have a bona fide requirement for ships and aircraft to carry out SSBN protection.

The peak of intensity reached in 1963 by Gorshkov and other naval officers in advocating more general purpose forces for SSBN protection not only was never reached again during the 1965-1971 period, the subject received little command attention and none from Gorshkov. Many different factors could have contributed to this but it seems likely that a major reason was that the Navy had realized that the substantial ships already programmed, including the four Kiev Class "ASW cruisers", were the most the Navy was going to get for the time being and that continued advocacy would merely irritate the Party leaders and the Army marshals to no good end. It seems likely, too, that the later had largely accepted the existence of the pro-SSBN mission as a fact of life that they would be unable to change for the foreseeable future. That is not to say, of course, that they would support any increase in the navy's share of the military budget to build more forces for SSBN protection.

III. THE SSBN-PROTECTION MISSION SINCE THE 24TH CONGRESS

In June 1971 some "handbook data" on the ASW submarines of the NATO naval powers were presented in Naval Digest "for the officers of the Navy".^{1/} One of the main points of the article was that "the military-political leadership of NATO is giving exceptionally great significance to the development of nuclear-powered torpedo submarines" which that leadership was alleged to consider "most effective in combat with the submarines of the enemy". The U.S. Navy was reported to have fifty such submarines in commission as of the 1st of June 1971 with twenty six more "on order or in various stages of construction" and a force-level goal of 105 to 110 such submarines. The U.K. was said to have four SSNs in operation and five more under construction; France was reported to be "planning to begin construction of nuclear-powered torpedo submarines in the immediate future while the Federal Republic of Germany, Holland, Italy and Japan were all "showing significant interest" in building SSNs. This portrayal of the present and future ASW-submarine threat to the USSR's missile and torpedo submarines was of a piece with the similar descriptions which have been noted earlier in this study by Admiral Gorshkov in 1963 and 1964 and by Admiral Chabanenko in 1968. As commented earlier with regard to the vivid Gorshkov and Chabanenko elucidations of the ASW submarine "threat", particularly to the USSR's SSBNs, such descriptions obviously served the purpose of justifying larger, more modern Soviet naval forces to counter that threat in order to protect the seaborne portion of the Soviet Union's strategic deterrence and war-fighting forces. This 1971 threat portrayal, however, was much lower-keyed in that it was earmarked for the troops and unlikely to be read by the military or Party leaders.

^{1/}Unsigned article, "Atomnye torpednye podvodnye lodki VMS stran NATO: spravochnye dannye offitseru flota", Morskoi sbornik No. 6, June 1971, p. 107.

Three months later, in September 1971, an article by a Captain First Rank in Naval Digest made the same point, almost certainly for the same reason. Great attention is being given by all navies of the great powers^{1/} to nuclear-powered torpedo (multi-purpose) submarines".^{1/} Moreover, this article went on to imply the possibility that the USSR might be well-advised to follow the American example of stopping all further construction of diesel-powered submarines: "...in the U.S., diesel-powered submarines are not being built anymore and the Navy is being supplemented only with nuclear-powered ones".^{2/}

Most importantly this article gave the first published listing of the priority missions for SSNs -- ostensibly for the U.S. Navy but in all likelihood intended to inform Soviet readers that this was the way the mission-ball was bouncing in the USSR with regard to SSN mission priorities. In the article the pro-SSBN mission was listed as second after one for ASW in general: "Their SSNs' basic missions are considered to be combat with submarines and the protection of their own missile submarines".^{3/} Since the first-listed role did not specify for combat with missile submarines, it is not certain whether or not the anti-SSBN mission was considered to enjoy top priority or to share it with the pro-SSBN mission.

Only two months later another article appeared in Naval Digest portraying the "threat" to Soviet submarines of the ASW submarines being built by the Western naval powers. Entitled "The Evolution of the Struggle with Submarines" and written by another Captain First Rank, the article called attention to the allegedly "enormous attention being paid to the development and modernization of forces and means for ASW by the capitalist

^{1/}Captain First Rank D. P. Sokha, "Vchera i segodnya podvodnykh sil" (The Yesterday and Today of Submarines), Morskoi sbornik No. 9, September 1971, p. 28.

^{2/}Ibid., p. 28.

^{3/}Ibid., p. 28.

naval powers".^{1/} This article also carried the implication that the USSR should reconsider its policy of continuing to build diesel-powered submarines for ASW by observing that in the U.S. Navy's ASW development "the leading role is being accorded to nuclear-powered ASW submarines".^{2/}

Another published listing of pro-SSBN as the second priority mission for ASW submarines after the anti-SSBN one appeared only four months after the first (by Captain Sokha in the September 1971 Naval Digest, as reported above). Also appearing in the Naval Digest, in the January 1972 issue, the statement to this effect is to be found in an article headed "Some Trends in the Development of Naval Forces" by a Captain First Rank Aleshkin: "There are torpedo submarines in the navies of a number of capitalist countries (and more are building) which are assigned primarily to the search and destruction of nuclear-powered missile and torpedo submarines of an enemy and also for the support of their own forces".^{3/} Aleshkin's formulation was analytically more helpful in specifying both "missile and torpedo submarines" rather than just "submarines" as Sokha had put it. Since sinking the opponent's torpedo submarines, which was listed with but after missile submarines, is the main task involved in the pro-SSBN mission, as expressed somewhat euphemistically above as "the support of their own forces", it can be concluded tentatively that the pro-SSBN mission for ASW submarines was in a very close second place to the anti-SSBN mission in Aleshkin's formulation. Since he was

^{1/} Captain First Rank V. Yefremenko, "Evolyutsiya bor'by s podvodnymi lodkami", Morskoi sbornik No. 11, November 1971, p. 23.

^{2/} Ibid., p. 23. As Admiral Chabanenko previously was noted to have done, Captain Yefremenko mirror-imaged the Soviet requirements for modernizing their ASW submarines, essentially only adding increased speed to the list given by Chabanenko: increased depth of submergence, greater speed, less noisy, improved sonar, and better weapons.

^{3/} Captain First Rank N. Aleshkin, "Nekotorye tendentsii razvitiya voenno-morskikh sil", Morskoi sbornik No. 1, January 1972, p. 25.

only referring to mission priorities for ASW submarines, however, no firm conclusions can be drawn from the close second place accorded to the pro-SSBN mission as to how that mission would place in the overall mission structure, especially with regard to the strategic strike roles of Soviet SSBNs and, possibly, with the anti-SLOC mission. However, since nuclear-powered submarines of all classes were considered the Navy's "main strike forces", it seems probable that the close-second listing given by Captains Sokha and Aleshkin to pro-SSBN right after anti-SSBN accurately reflected the Navy's views on the overall priority listing of its missions.

The Aleshkin article was particularly interesting, not so much for reaffirming for the umpteenth time the pro-SSBN mission's official existence in the event of a nuclear war but for first implying in public print the need for that mission in case of an initial conventional phase to a nuclear war:

The strategic forces of the Navy...are not capable of realizing their potential even in nuclear war without the appropriate support of other forces. And in the event of a non-nuclear start to a war, they will, in general, be held in reserve.^{1/}

Another article in the same January 1972 issue of the Naval Digest, this one written by a naval-engineering officer, not only again reaffirmed the validity of the pro-SSBN mission but gave what apparently was the first overt indication, guarded as it was, that the USSR was looking ahead to the different, if less difficult, requirements for protecting the by-then projected Delta-Class SSBN. The relevant passage read as follows with the phrases underlined that strike the author of this study as so different from earlier formulations and as of such a nature as to suggest that it probably had been written with the Delta-class SSBN in mind while using the U.S. Trident-class SSBN as a surrogate:

^{1/}Ibid., p. 25.

Arming submarines with long-range missiles enables them to operate...at a significant distance from the shores of a probable enemy, reliably protected by surface ships and aviation. These submarines can launch their missiles both when transiting and when leaving their own bases and even from points along the shores of the American continent. Arranging launch areas close to one's own shores appreciably simplifies the organization of combat and cuts down on the expenditure of fuel and the time spent on ocean transit.^{1/}

Another point in the above quotation is worth particular note. Only "surface ships and aviation" are mentioned as the forces for providing protection to SSBNs. If SSNs were being used in addition, the fact was being kept a state secret or inclusion of submarines was deliberately omitted in an effort at disinformation -- which seems unlikely both because both before and after this article there was discussion in the Soviet press of the merits of employing SSNs as forces for pro-SSBN. Moreover, the author has often noted that naval-engineering officers (including engineering-admirals Kotov and Novikov) tend to be apolitical and "tell it as it is" without any beating about the proverbial bush. Hence, it seems reasonable to formulate the hypothesis for subsequent testing that up to late 1971 when the Yerofeyev article presumably was written, Soviet SSNs were not in general use for the pro-SSBN mission.

In the last of his eleven-article series in Naval Digest on "Navies in War and Peace" that appeared in February 1973, Admiral Gorshkov picked up the theme which we first noted in the Stepanov article in Naval Digest of December 1961, of the failure of the German submarine campaigns in both world wars having been due to the lack of naval surface and air forces for support of the German submarines. His purpose was implied by

^{1/}Engineering-Captain Second Rank V. Yerofeyev, (A Replacement for "Polaris" and Poseidon") Morskoi sbornik No. 1, January 1972, p. 89.

the Navy chief clearly enough as one of urging that the Navy be provided with large enough ASW forces to provide adequate support to the Soviet submarine forces.

Citing the Germans' two-time failure as a horrible example of what could happen to the Soviet Union, Gorshkov warned the Party and military leadership of the high price of "underrating" the necessity for providing adequate surface ships and aircraft for supporting Soviet submarine operations against a "strong opponent". This warning was considered by Gorshkov of such great importance as to warrant inclusion in his final, summary article of the "Navies-in-War-and-Peace" series (the so-called "Gorshkov Papers") that it merits full quotation here:

As is known, by the will of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the course was taken in our country of building an oceanic navy, the basis of which is comprised of nuclear-powered submarines of various designations....

However, our modern navy, which is assigned to carry out combat against a strong opponent, can not be just a submarine navy. Underrating the necessity for support of the operations of submarines by aviation and surface ships in the previous two world wars cost the German command dearly. In particular, as already related above, one of the reasons for the failure of "unlimited submarine warfare" conducted by the Germans was the lack of such support for the submarines, which forced them to act alone without the protection of other forces.

Consequently, while according priority to the development of the submarine forces, we consider that we require not only submarines but also surface warships of various designations. The latter, apart from affording combat stability to the submarines, are assigned to a wide circle of missions both in peacetime and in a period of war.^{1/}

^{1/} Fleet Admiral S. G. Gorshkov, "Voyenno-morskiye floty v voynakh i v mirnoye vremya", Morskoi sbornik No. 2, February 1973, pp. 20-21.

In February 1973 there appeared a monograph with the title ASW Weapons and Their Platforms that included the following sentence:

The /Soviet/ tactical manuals for the combat employment of /each of the types of/ antisubmarine forces and means are being worked out in direct relationship to the missions which are carried out by modern nuclear-powered missile submarines.^{1/}

Despite its rather convoluted phrasing, this passage seems to be a reasonably unambiguous assertion that Soviet ASW tactics are focussed primarily on the anti-SSBN and pro-SSBN ASW missions rather than on pro-SLOC and protection of major naval combatants (as is generally considered to be the major roles of the NATO navies). This is consistent, in its identification of the anti-SSBN and pro-SSBN missions as being the main roles for Soviet ASW forces, with the statement quoted earlier from Captain First Rank Aleshkin's article in the January 1972 issue of Naval Digest that "there are torpedo submarines in the navies of a number of capitalist countries which are assigned primarily to the search and destruction of nuclear-powered missile and torpedo submarines of an enemy and also for the support of their own forces". Since the ASW monograph is explicitly talking about the Soviet Navy rather than resorting to a foreign-navy surrogate, as was the case in the Aleshkin article, the above statement from the monograph also constitutes supporting evidence that the Aleshkin article was, in fact, using the U.S. Navy as a surrogate to talk about the roles of Soviet SSBNs. This would seem to upgrade the likelihood that anti-SSBN and pro-SSBN are the main roles of Soviet SSNs to at least that of a strong probability.

^{1/}A. A. Kvitnitskiy, "Protivolodochnoye oruzhiye i ego nositeli", Moscow: DOSAAF Press, signed to press 15 February 1973, p. 78. Although not indicated in this monograph, the author is known from other writings on ASW to have been an active-duty Captain First Rank and hence answerable to Admiral Gorshkov for what he wrote.

This same ASW monograph also included a statement implying that the Soviet Navy (i.e., Admiral Gorshkov) had come down officially on the side of the "team" concept of ASW as requiring coordinated actions by aircraft, SSNs and ASW surface ships to obtain coordinated actions by aircraft, SSNs and ASW surface ships to obtain best results:

It is considered /by Gorshkov, apparently/ that not one of these /three types of/ ASW weapons platforms possesses all of the qualities necessary for effective ASW action.^{1/}

In March 1973, just a month after the ASW monograph discussed immediately above, an article in the Soviet journal International Affairs purporting to discuss "Naval Power in U.S. Strategic Plans" provided the second piece of evidence (after that by Engineering-Captain Yerofeyev 15 months earlier in the January 1972 issue of Naval Digest, as previously discussed) that the Soviets were giving thought to the different (if simpler) requirements for operating Delta-class SSBNs in home waters. The relevant passage stated:

...the Trident-missile system...will make it possible to deploy the submarines carrying them, U.S. experts believe, almost anywhere in the World Ocean. These will apparently be separate contiguous zones on the shoreline of the U.S.A. itself. U.S. specialists believe that this will also make it possible to concentrate there the main ASW force which will assume a new function, that of protecting the strategic missile force.^{2/}

Among the spate of articles by senior Soviet naval officers that appeared as usual in the Soviet press on the eve of Navy Day of 1973, one by Admiral Amel'ko contained a passage which seems to lend itself only to the interpretation that the Leningrad-class

^{1/} Ibid., p. 78.

^{2/} G. Svyatov and A. Kokoshin, "Naval Power in U.S. Strategic Plans", International Affairs, April 1973, pp. 58-59. While the above translation of the Russian original appeared in the April 1973 edition of the English version of the same journal in the Russian language (Mezhdunarodnaya zhizn'), the article appeared in the Russian version a month earlier and the passage quoted above is to be found on pp. 80-81.

"ASW cruiser" was built for the primary role of SSBN protection. The pertinent paragraph is quoted in full:

The necessity of combat with a submarine enemy has led to the rapid development in our Navy of effective ASW means. We have received qualitatively new ships which have extensive capabilities for combat with submarines. The combining of the tactical-technical capabilities of helicopters and ships has proven successful and have found their embodiment in the ASW cruisers of the "Leningrad" type. In exercises and on extended cruises, these ships have more than once demonstrated a high military capability. ASW aircraft, carrying modern equipment and weapons onboard, are effective means of combat with a submarine enemy.^{1/}

The following considerations led the author of this study to the interpretation that the foregoing passage logically can only be interpreted to mean that the (two) Moskva/Leningrad Class helicopter-carrying ships were designed and built for the main role of protecting the USSR's strategic missile submarines. First, Soviet writings have never been chary of calling an SSBN an SSBN in their writings, so Amel'ko's notably cautious use of just "submarines" flagged the possibility that he either was talking about SSNs alone or SSBNs and SSNs together. It will be recalled that Captain Sokha's similar use of the unadorned word "submarines" in his September 1971 article in Naval Digest was subsequently shown to mean both SSBNs and SSNs by the article in the same journal in January 1972 by Captain Aleshkin. Hence, it seems logical to infer at least that Admiral Amel'ko would have said SSBNs if he only had strategic submarines in mind. The other pertinent consideration derives from the nature of the anti-SSBN problem for the USSR. Given the Soviet Navy's inability to gain and maintain sea control in open-ocean areas to conduct anti-SSBN ASW, a situation only exacerbated by the Moskva/Leningrad Class helicopter

^{1/} Admiral N. Amel'ko, "Mesto sluzhby-Okean" (Place of Service - the Ocean), Vodnyi transport, 28 July 1973, p. 1.

carriers' lack of an adequate SAM capability or any of their own fighter air cover to operate in the hostile wartime environment that would be created by the threat of air strikes from our CVAs, it would seem to be refusing to credit Gorshkov with any common sense to suggest that the Moskva/Leningrad Class helicopters were intended for any significant amount of sustained anti-SSBN ASW thousands of miles away from Soviet shores and any land-based air support where U.S. SSBNs would have to be hunted if at all. It is true theoretically that he conceivably might have had in mind an ideal situation in which each of the two ships would be tracking an SSBN and succeed in sinking it at the moment that the war broke out before being sunk themselves, but Gorshkov has shown himself to be anything but such a pie-in-the-sky dreamer.

In an article in the Naval Digest in March 1974, which carried the title "The Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow of Surface Ships", an active-duty Captain First Rank made six points in the three following paragraphs which are related to the pro-SSBN mission:

The revolution in military affairs, which took place in the postwar period, brought nuclear-powered missile submarines to the fore as the main striking force of navies....However, as is known from history, /even/ the most powerful forces are not such that they can achieve success without cooperation with other forces....One of the reasons for the failure of the "unlimited submarine warfare" conducted by the Germans in two world wars was precisely the lack of such support and the proper protection for the submarines.

Together with this, the experience of wars and of the postwar period demonstrates that submarines yield to surface warships (and, of course, to aircraft carriers) in the protection of convoys and landing operations. Consequently, in addition to submarines, surface ships of various designations have of necessity entered the composition of navies. Quite apart from combat support for submarines, surface ships have a wide circle of /other/ missions. And this has necessitated the building of warships of special construction and with particular armament complexes....

Submarine forces have become the main strategic strike forces of the navies of the major seapowers. However, a modern navy can not be just a submarine navy. The result of the underestimation of the necessity for support of submarine operations by aviation and surface ships is known from the history of two world wars. Consequently, Soviet naval science, /while/ according priority to the development of the submarine forces, considers that our Navy also requires surface ships of various designations. The latter, apart from giving combat stability to /our/ submarines, are assigned to carry out a wide circle of missions both in peacetime and in the course of a war.^{1/} (Emphasis supplied)

The six points from the above quotation relevant to this present study of the pro-SSBN mission may be analyzed as follows:

- (1) The necessity for the pro-SSBN mission is rationalized from the historical experience of the unsuccessful German submarine campaigns of the two world wars on the basis that failure to provide "support" and "protection" to their submarines was one of the reasons for the Germans' repeated failure;
- (2) Surface ships are (again) implied to have the pro-SSBN mission as their primary role. Use of the phrases "Quite apart from combat support for submarines" and "apart from giving combat stability to /our/ submarines" constitute even more credible evidence than would a direct assertion of the pro-SSBN mission's existence and of it being the main mission for surface ships by virtue of the fact that the author's phrasing makes it clear that he is taking those two facts as an unquestioned premise that requires no proof or discussion in his treatment of the role of surface ships;

^{1/} Captain First Rank N. Vlasov, "Vchera, segodnya i zaftra nadvodnykh korablei", Morskoi sbornik No. 3, March 1974, pp. 22-23 and 27. The two last sentences above are underlined to call attention to the fact that they are a verbatim repetition from Admiral Gorshkov's "Navies in War and Peace", Morskoi sbornik No. 2, February 1973, p. 21. It is quite possible that Vlasov had contributed this part to the Gorshkov "Papers" and so felt free to use it without attribution. However, in light of other such cases of seeming plagiarism, it may be that the practice is considered acceptable. If so, it is indicative of how inter-related and written toward achievement of common goals published Soviet naval writings are, with pride-of-authorship distinctly secondary.

- (3) The "warships of special construction" said to be required for the pro-SSBN mission and "a wide circle of other missions", both from the circumstances of the situation and for the lack of other suitably qualified candidates, may be seen to be a reference to the USSR's large air-capable ships, particularly the Moskva/Leningrad Class helicopter carriers and the Kiev Class VTOL/helicopter carriers. The "particular armament complexes" then become, in this analysis, mainly the embarked helicopters and VTOL aircraft.
- (4) In the 2nd paragraph's reference to his assertion that submarines must "yield to surface ships (and, of course, to aircraft carriers) in the protection of convoys", it is not at all unlikely, considering the considerably looser usage of the word "convoy" in the USSR than in the west (where it tends to be more closely identified with merchant ship convoys), that the author was using "convoys" as intended to describe groups of Soviet SSBNs being "convoyed" from their bases to effect a "breakthrough" of any ASW barriers and so reach the open oceans. This likelihood is strengthened by the fact that surface ships and aircraft carriers have been said by the authors of both the article being discussed as well as the preceding one to have the pro-SSBN role as their primary one; consequently it would be a glaring inconsistency not to intend to imply SSBN protection in this case when surface ships, in general, and "of course, aircraft carriers" in particular are being discussed. That this article unquestionably was concerning itself in this particular paragraph with the leading role of surface ships in the pro-SSBN mission is shown two sentences later where the "Quite apart" phrase occurs;
- (5) The statement in the third paragraph regarding "the necessity for support of submarine operations by aviation and surface ships", while made in the context of the German failure to do so in either world war (when lack of the capability to communicate adequately with surface ships let alone with aircraft would have prevented the close coordination that would be required for such point-defense tactical screening "support" operations). Consequently, it seems likely that failure to mention submarines here or elsewhere in the article as playing a role in SSBN protection is yet another indication that, as of the time the article was written in early 1974, submarine support was not a standard part of pro-SSBN tactics; and

- (6) Despite the gloss supplied in the final paragraph of the above quotation concerning the need to learn from the failure of the German submarine campaigns in two world wars, the uniquely straightforward admission that Soviet submarines require the support of other forces, specifically surface ships, in order to protect them from NATO ASW forces certainly constitutes an unprecedentedly direct admission of the vulnerability of even the USSR's vaunted "main striking forces". And even though this admission was made in order to justify more ASW forces, the fact that it was made at all and so unambiguously is notable indeed.

In December 1974 a particularly revealing article by a Naval War College professor, Rear Admiral Pavlovich, appeared in the Military-Historical Journal. Bearing the title, "Basic Factors in the Development of Naval Art", it argued at an abstract theoretical level that the development of SSBNs into a highly effective weapons system logically required that they be given greater "defense in depth" including a more extended range of surveillance of the enemy's forces. That the Soviet pro-SSBN effort be broadened beyond point defense of SSBNs to wage a strategic offensive against an enemy's ASW forces was also advocated.^{1/} Pavlovich went on subsequently to assert that the value of surface ships had been underrated and seemed to be saying that they should play a greater role in giving "combat stability" to Soviet SSBNs.^{2/}

Finally on the subject of SSBN protection, Professor Pavlovich noted that the growing "offensive capabilities of all types of armed forces increased the theoretical likelihood

^{1/} Professor, Rear Admiral N. Pavlovich, "Osnovnye faktory razvitiya voenno-morskogo iskusstva", Voyenno-istoricheskiy zhurnal No. 12, December 1974, p. 48.

^{2/} Ibid., p. 49.

that the strikes exchanged in the initial period of a war would be "decisive". Apparently for this reason, the "demands for increasing the individual weight and size of all types of protection" were said to have grown. Inasmuch as the subject of submarine protection is far and away the predominant "protection" theme in Soviet naval writings and since SSBN protection is of vital importance to the USSR's deterrent credibility and war-fighting capabilities, it seems a fair guess that Pavlovich had SSBN protection foremost in his mind in writing the particularly obscure passage just quoted. If this surmise is correct, then it is clear that the Professor's stress on the potentially decisive nature of the initial nuclear exchange, followed in the next sentence of the same paragraph by noting a requirement for better (SSBN) protection, was intended to convey to the elite insider of the Soviet "political-military" bureaucracy the Navy's advocacy of getting on with the building of adequate naval forces for SSBN protection because it would probably be too late to remedy the situation once a war had started. In the preceding paragraph Pavlovich had noted the importance of "preemptive action against an enemy" as having "always been one of the most important conditions furthering effective strikes and the seizing of the initiative".^{1/} So, it is possible that the good professor was really suggesting that the USSR might even consider it necessary to deliver a preemptive strike.

Still one paragraph earlier the Pavlovich article had talked about the importance of building a large enough number of "new means" of war to achieve the full potential effect of "technological surprise". In view of his subsequent discussion of (SSBN) protection, it is possible that having adequate ASW forces to provide good protection to Soviet SSBNs was the form of "technological" surprise that the professor had in mind.

^{1/} Ibid., p. 50.

A graphic expression of the need for providing SSBNs with strong supporting forces was published in the Naval Digest in October 1975 by one of the USSR's leading naval theorists. Holder of a doctorate in naval sciences and probably working at the Naval War College in Leningrad, Captain First Rank V'yunenکو made the twin points that SSBNs had been recognized as "the main striking forces of a modern navy" and, as a consequence, sinking them had become the raison d'etre "of all other naval forces". The relevant passage reads as follows:

Having received recognition as the main striking forces of a modern navy, nuclear-powered submarines with ballistic missiles have attracted attention to themselves as the basic object of retribution of all other naval forces...^{1/}

Not content with this vivid portrayal of Soviet SSBNs being the quarry for all of the naval forces of NATO, V'yunenکو went this one better by falsely attributing to "foreign specialists" (rather than to Soviet "specialists" in general and, probably, to himself in particular) the view that using SSNs to provide support for SSBNs on patrol was "one of the new trends in naval tactics".^{2/}

^{1/}Captain First Rank N. V'yunenکو, Doctor of Naval Sciences, "O nekotorykh tendentsiyakh v razvitii morskoi taktiki" (Concerning Some Trends in the Development of Naval Tactics), Morskoi sbornik No. 10, October 1975, p. 21. V'yunenکو also pointed out the utility of stationary underwater submarine detection systems like SOSUS. Since he did so in a pro-SSBN context, it seems probable that he was implying the need for such systems to protect SSBN sanctuaries

^{2/}"Submarines of operational-tactical designation (i.e., torpedo-attack SSNs or SS, as distinguished from SSBNs which are of "strategic designation") are increasingly...being used for the protection of the combat patrolling of strategic submarines. In the opinion of foreign specialists, this fundamentally strengthens these units and significantly decreases the degree of the threat to them of enemy submarines". Ibid., p. 22.

By invoking the dialectical blessing of SSBN protection allegedly constituting a new trend, V'yunenکو was not only falsifying the facts in that he attributed the trend to other navies but he also was performing the function of dressing up the Navy's policy advocacy of more SSBN-protection forces in a suitably acceptable theoretical cloak. It is particularly interesting in this case, as in others already noted, that Gorshkov and his top officers feel free to falsify the facts and so misrepresent the threat to the Party leaders and marshals whenever they find it expedient to try to scare them into providing more naval forces for one mission or another, pro-SSBN in this case.

An apparent further indication of Soviet thinking about the ways that should be adopted for protecting their Delta-class SSBNs in their home waters, or even right in their bases, appeared in a DOSAAF monograph Missile Weapons at Sea which appeared for sale in December 1975. Resorting as usual to a surrogate to talk about their own naval forces, this popular account of modern naval missile weapons described the Trident missile programmed by the U.S. stating that it was slated to have a range of over 10,000 kilometers, and concluded that the Pentagon considered that the Trident-II missile "will enable submarines located in their bases or in the coastal regions of the U.S. to deliver strikes on targets in the Eurasian continent".^{1/}

It merits recalling the Svyatov and Kokoshin article in the March 1973 issue of International Affairs in which the possibility was raised of being enabled by the longer missile ranges of the new SSBNs of protecting them more securely in home waters. However, Missile Weapons at Sea was the first

^{1/}K. V. Morozov, Raketnoye oruzhiye na more, Moscow: DOSAAF Press, signed to press 12 December 1975, p. 53. Morozov is known from other writings to be an active-duty Captain First Rank.

Soviet open source to suggest that SSBNs might be protected right in their bases. Since missile submarine bases are easily located and targeted for nuclear strike, it would defy common sense for either side to plan to keep their SSBNs in their normal peacetime bases during a war, or even in periods of crisis, for that matter. However, the Soviet Navy is known to have a well-established practice of making use of "maneuvering" (advanced) bases for their naval forces. Such bases are characterized by lack of any shore facilities or even signs of habitation that might draw the attention to them of photo-interpreters of reconnaissance satellite photography. Accordingly, it seems highly likely that it was to such "maneuvering bases" that the naval-officer author of the 1975 monograph had reference.

Admiral Gorshkov's magnum opus, Seapower of the State, which was released for publication in late November, 1975 and appeared in Moscow bookstores in early 1976, returned to the subject mentioned in the last of his "Navies in War and Peace" series of February 1973 concerning the need for providing support for submarine operations as indicated by the Germans' submarine campaigns of both world wars. On this occasion, Gorshkov elaborated on his earlier treatment and increased the alleged extent of the penalty the Germans paid in World War II in terms of submarines sunk just while deploying from their bases without surface ship and aircraft "support" from the "more than 50 percent" of the December 1961 Stepanov article in Naval Digest to 70 percent:

The experience in the II World War gives us a graphic portrayal of the role which support of submarines directly on the seas was supposedly to play. As far as their mass employment was concerned, the German command left them to their own resources. Throughout the war, they did not make a single attempt to employ organized counteraction against the Allied antisubmarine forces which operated with complete impunity. This, obviously, explains why 70% of German submarines were sunk in transit to the combat areas. 1/

1/ Fleet Admiral S. G. Gorshkov, Morskaya moshch' gosudarstva. Moscow: Military Press of the Ministry of Defense, 1976, p. 197. Similarly, on p. 428, Germany is faulted for not having built "the forces capable of supporting the operations of these 1131 submarines" that were operational in World War II.

It is clear from the last sentence that Gorshkov is more concerned here with again raising the issue of planning for a campaign of strategic scale against the enemy's ASW forces than with the direct protection of each deploying SSBN. This suggests the possibilities that Gorshkov either may have become convinced of the unlikelihood that the Soviet Navy would ever be provided with the huge forces that would be required to insure point-defense protection for any substantial share of the USSR's SSBNs or that he may have finally agreed with the view that escorting SSBNs was too prone to be counterproductive in view of the likelihood of alerting the enemy's ASW forces to the location of the SSBNs. Whatever the reason, Gorshkov was recommending an alternative, or more likely a supplement, to the Navy's SSBN-protection measures that would have extensively involved the Strategic Missile Forces and the Long-range Air Force in a campaign of strategic scale to destroy both the bases of NATO ASW forces as well as its ASW hunter-killer groups at sea.

Seapower of the State contained two further passages concerning the pro-SSBN mission. The first restated the point that we have already encountered several times that providing "combat stability", i.e., protection, to the USSR's submarines was one reason that "various types" of surface ships had been built for the Navy:

For providing combat stability to the submarines.... for combat with the submarine and ASW forces of the enemy, and for carrying out of other specific missions, various types of surface ships are entering the composition of the Navy.^{1/}

It is worth noting Gorshkov's use of the phrase "submarines and ASW forces" in the above passage. It would seem to suggest

^{1/}Ibid., pp. 307-308.

that whatever role might have been assigned to ASW submarines, they had not been integrated into the "ASW forces" proper.

The third and most interesting of the points raised by Gorshkov in his book concerning the pro-SSBN mission was his claim that it had been decided only after "a great deal of research" that the USSR would still be able to provide its SSBNs with adequate, continuing protection despite the fact that NATO ASW capabilities were being constantly modernized. The relevant passage is quoted below:

Can submarines, despite the constant modernization of ASW, carry out their strategic goals at sea? To answer that question it was necessary to conduct a great deal of research. All of it invariably supported the high effectiveness of submarines given their correct employment and proper combat support. This conclusion^{1/} especially applies to nuclear-powered submarines.

The fact that Gorshkov was claiming to have conducted exhaustive research into the future prospects for the Navy's conduct of the pro-SSBN ASW role, and particularly the unlikelihood that 100 percent of the results were favorable, suggests that he was fighting a rearguard action against a serious challenge, most likely from the Army marshals, to the continuing claim on the great resources being ploughed into the pro-SSBN mission. It should be recalled in this regard that in 1967 a book on the Soviet Armed Forces edited by General Zheltcv had explicitly asserted that "submarines possess the greatest self-reliance so additional forces do not have to be provided for their protection".

February of 1976 was notable for the appearance of two articles both misrepresenting the NATO "threat" with the apparent purpose of supporting the continuance and/or expansion of the submarine-protection effort, primarily that for SSBN protection. The first of these articles was one by Professor, Doctor of Historical Sciences Potapov in the Military-Historical Journal for February which alleged that one of the missions of U.S. carrier task forces was "to cover the regions of patrolling

^{1/}Ibid., p. 309.

of the strategic missile submarines of the U.S.". ^{1/} This sounded very much like a plug for a follow-on to the Kiev class VTOL carriers that would have high-performance, fixed-wing aircraft that would be capable even of protecting a pro-SSBN force against CVA strikes in the open ocean.

The second such article, which appeared in Naval Digest, also in February 1976, made use of one of the most transparently false foreign-navy surrogates to be found in the Soviet naval literature: that one of the weaknesses of the Polaris and Poseidon submarines was "the weak defensibility of their combat patrol regions against the actions of ASW forces". ^{2/} That this was intended to make clear to even the general readers that the patrol zones of Soviet SSBNs, probably the Yankee-class primarily, were in need of better protection seems a virtual certainty. The article continued directly to state that, with "the development of a longer-range ballistic missile and a new submarine to carry it, new capabilities for submarine protection are being sought". Although this nominally was a reference to the U.S. Trident missiles and submarines, the reference was unmistakably to the new Soviet Delta Class SSBN.

In the following month of March 1976 an article in Naval Digest went so far (in what seems tantamount to an intensive and open lobbying campaign by the Navy to justify more forces for the pro-SSBN mission) that the vulnerability of Soviet SSBNs was even hinted at broadly. In this almost unprecedented assertion ^{3/} the two authors did not even bother to resort to the nominal camouflage of a historical or foreign-navy surrogate form of expression. Rather they repeated, noticeably without any pretense of refuting it, a claim allegedly from the foreign press that "one of the basic, if not the main, mission of nuclear-powered

^{1/} Professor, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Captain First Rank I. Potapov, "Evolutsiya udarnykh sil VMS SShA v poslevoyennyy period" (The Evolution of the Striking Forces of the U.S. Navy in the Post-war Period), Voenno-istoricheskii zhurnal No. 2, February 1976, p. 94.

^{2/} Captain 2nd Rank E. Rakitin, "Novaya podvodnaya raketno-yadernaya sistema 'Traident'" (The New "Trident" Nuclear-missile Submarine System), Morskoi sbornik No. 2, February 1976, p. 90.

^{3/} It may be recalled that Gorshkov had made a comparable, although esoterically expressed, claim that nuclear submarines were vulnerable in his 19 May 1963 article in Izvestiya.

torpedo submarines" was that of "constant shadowing in peacetime of Soviet nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarines with the aim of destroying them at the outset of a nuclear war.^{1/} Gorshkov is known to run a very taut ship as regards expression of independent views by his subordinates, including in the Navy's professional journal, so the appearance of this article in Naval Digest probably could have taken place only with the Navy chief's sanction if not instigation. If this was, in fact, the case, it lends itself to the interpretation that the normally cautious and security-minded Gorshkov was hard-pressed indeed to justify what he considered the necessary general purpose force levels for the pro-SSBN mission when he would resort to impugning the invulnerability of the supposedly most invulnerable part of the Soviet Union's nuclear deterrent forces.

Another example of more clearly advocating more pro-SSBN forces by not resorting to any surrogate form of expression was found in the Naval Digest four months later when two naval writers, one an active-duty Captain First Rank, made it abundantly clear that the USSR required SOSUS-type systems, almost certainly for the protection of their SSBNs:

Aircraft are especially effective when operating in a system of zonal defense under direction of a stationary sonar complex.^{2/}

^{1/}V. Chizov and A. Zheludev, "Protivolodochnye podvodnye lodki: Taktika ikh deistvii" (ASW Submarines: Tactics for Their Operations), Morskoi sbornik No. 3, March 1976, p. 96.

^{2/}Captain First Rank Yu. Bol'shakov and B. Komkov, "Taktika poiska podvodnykh lodok samoletami" (Tactics for Submarine Search by Airplanes), Morskoi sbornik No. 7, July 1976, p. 88. For an earlier but less obvious hint that the USSR required SOSUS type systems, see the footnote to the relevant text describing the V'yunenkov article in the October 1975 issue of Naval Digest. Moreover, in another Naval Digest article three months before the Navy call for SOSUS-type systems in the Bol'shakov article, a related plea had been voiced, although not so openly, by claiming that "success in ASW operations is achieved only by the joint use of surface ships, submarines, and aviation, and also positional means for detection...". (Yu. Maslennikov, "Farvaterom 'Kholodnoi voyny'" (Roadstead of the "Cold War"), Morskoi sbornik No. 4, April 1976, p. 91.) This article was even more noteworthy for being the first in recent years to list submarines along with surface ships and aircraft as being essential for successful ASW. However, from the context one could not tell whether submarines had become an integrated part of Soviet ASW forces or whether the statement merely constituted an implicit argument that they should be made such a part.

March 1977 brought still another reference to the German failure to provide support to their submarines in the two world wars with the implied historical lesson that the USSR must not make the same mistake. In an article by recently-promoted Vice Admiral Stalbo, seemingly Admiral Gorshkov's favorite naval theorist and policy advocate, Stalbo referred to his chief's book Seapower of the State as having described the German experience in the following terms:

In the work it is...shown that they /the Germans/ employed their submarines /without the necessary measures of support"/ and took no special measures during the war for combatting the /enemies/ ASW forces.^{1/}

This brief mention of the German experience appeared to have the same motive as on the previous occasions that this historical surrogate was used -- that of justifying the pro-SSBN mission and the large forces required to execute it, particularly to support the Yankee-class SSBN.

In the spring of 1977, in a monograph by a Captain First Rank, there appeared a possible implication that, since Western SSNs allegedly would be deterred from operating in coastal waters by the danger of mines, the problem of protecting the Delta-class was not too great (and perhaps, therefore, the very substantial sums that would be required for installing "deeply-echeloned" SOSUS-type underwater submarine detection systems need not be expended). In the monograph in question, which was entitled ASW Forces and Means of Navies and had been published by the Ministry of Defense, the relevant statement read: "It is considered inexpedient to employ nuclear-powered submarines in closed and shallow sea theaters, in regions where the mine danger

^{1/}Vice Admiral K. Stalbo, "Tvorchestvo v issledovanii problem voenno-morskoj istorii" (Creativity in Researching the Problems of Naval History), Morskoj sbornik No. 3, March 1977, p. 22.

is great."^{1/}

Like the article in the Naval Digest a year earlier (March 1976), the Defense Ministry monograph ASW Forces and Means of Navies went to the extreme of implying that the Soviet SSBN force was vulnerable to being trailed constantly by NATO SSNs which would then be able, at the outbreak of war, to destroy them. The passage in question reads as follows:

To all of the /NATO ASW/ forces is assigned the mission of searching for the submarines of the enemy with the ultimate aim of constantly and accurately knowing the location of each strategic submarine of the enemy in real time.^{2/}

The latest contribution to our knowledge of the pro-SSBN mission was by Admiral Gorshkov in a pamphlet The Navy which was prepared for the occasion of the year celebrated for the 60th Anniversary of the Army and Navy.^{3/} In it the Navy Commander-in-Chief may be seen to still be giving great attention to justifying the pro-SSBN mission and the large general purpose naval forces that would be required to carry it out in the face of NATO's naval forces. After stating that submarines and aviation constitute the main forces of the Soviet Navy and that their main weapons are nuclear missiles, Gorshkov found the most important comment that he wanted to make on this general statement the fact that the Navy had been given various kinds of surface ships and aircraft in order to be able to provide Soviet submarines with "combat stability" and "all-around protection".

^{1/} Captain First Rank B. I. Rodionov, Protivolodochnye sily i sredstva flotov, Moscow: Military Press of the Ministry of Defense, p. 20. This monograph had been signed to press on April 5, 1977.

^{2/} Ibid., p. 110.

^{3/} Hero of the Soviet Union, Fleet Admiral S. G. Gorshkov, Voyenno-morskoi flot, Moscow: Knowledge Press, signed to press 11 July 1977, p. 39.

This study concludes its detailed review of the evidence on this typical note from the man himself who has been responsible for the Navy's staunch and perservering advocacy of initially including, then enhancing in every feasible way, and retaining the role of SSBN-protection in the Soviet Navy's mission structure despite the marshals' opposition.

To sum up the key themes regarding pro-SSBN development during the past eight years of the Brezhnev era since the 24th Party Congress in the late winter of 1971, two aspects merit consideration: 1) the evidence that the SSBN-protection mission has survived up to the present, including the indirect evidence constituted by the repeated advocacy of more general-purpose naval forces for the pro-SSBN mission by Admiral Gorshkov and other naval officers and writers on naval subjects; and 2) the priority assigned to the pro-SSBN mission vis-a-vis other high priority Soviet missions. Let us examine each of these aspects in turn.

Nine of the articles and books examined above gave explicit evidence of the continuing existence of the pro-SSBN mission while the remaining five provided indirect evidence to the same effect by their advocacy of more and different ships to carry out the SSBN-protection mission. The nine pieces of evidence affording explicit evidence of the continuing retention of the pro-SSBN mission in the Navy's mission structure (despite the probable preference of at least some senior Army officers to see it dropped) merit first consideration.

The continued well-being of the pro-SSBN mission was evidenced in two articles by their inclusion of mission-priority listings for Soviet ASW submarines.^{1/} Four further media items provided indications of the continued presence of the pro-SSBN mission

^{1/} Articles by Captains First Rank Sokha and Aleshkin in the issues of Naval Digest for September 1971 and January 1972, respectively.

in the Navy's mission structure by introducing considerations associated with protecting the Delta Class SSBNs in their bases or coastal waters.^{1/}

The remaining pieces of evidence were as various as they were interesting. Admiral Amel'ko described the training exercises of the Moskva/Leningrad Class helicopter carriers in a manner that seemed to indicate that they had been built primarily for pro-SSBN.^{2/} Two other media items made their contribution by, respectively, advocating and refuting the need for SOSUS type installations around Soviet SSBN bases to protect the USSR's strategic submarines from being ambushed.^{3/}

The last and most recent testimony to the continued survival of the pro-SSBN mission comes, fittingly enough, from Admiral Gorshkov. In his 60-page brochure The Navy, published in 1977 by Knowledge Press in honor of the 60th anniversary of the "Army and Navy" (as the Soviet Armed Forces are often still called), Gorshkov states that the Soviet Navy had received new ships in order to be capable of providing "combat stability" and "all-around protection" to Soviet submarines (see footnote 3, p. 54).

In the case of the indirect indications of the continued presence in the Soviet naval mission structure of SSBN protection, the first three of them appeared in quick succession in the second half of 1971 and all portrayed the threat to Soviet (strategic missile) submarines by the allegedly "exceptional" or "enormous" attention allegedly being accorded by the NATO naval powers to

^{1/}For details the reader is referred back to the following: 1) Engineering Captain 2nd Rank Yerofeyev, Naval Digest, January 1972; 2) Svyatov & Kokoshin, International Affairs, April 1973; 3) Captain First Rank Vlasov, Naval Digest, March 1974; and 4) Captain First Rank Morozov, Missile Weapons at Sea, 1975.

^{2/}See his July 1973 article in Water Transport described above.

^{3/}See the foregoing account of the article in the July 1976 Naval Digest by Bol'shakov and Komkov and Komkov Captain First Rank Rodionov's monograph ASW Forces and Means of Navies which appeared in April 1977.

building ASW submarines.^{1/} The remaining data of this nature included warnings from Admiral Gorshkov in both his 1972-1973 series of Naval Digest articles on "Navies in War and Peace" and his 1976 book Seapower of the State. In the former the Navy chief warned of the danger (on the part of the marshals, almost certainly) of "underrating" the requirements for aircraft and surface ships to support Soviet (strategic missile) submarines, while in the latter he upped the potential penalty for the USSR in terms of SSBNs that could be sunk in attempting to reach the open ocean from their bases to 70% over an earlier figure of something just over 50%.

Additionally, Captain First Rank V'yunenko warned in the Naval Digest of October 1975 that the SSBN allegedly was the priority target for all of the naval forces of NATO. Two articles that appeared in February 1976 used different arguments to call for an air-capable ship that, in effect, would be able to hold its own against the enemy (CVAs) in the open ocean. Professor Potapov of the Naval War College wrote in the Military-Historical Journal that the U.S. employed its CVAs for pro-SSBN while Captain 2nd Rank Rakitin indicated that SSBN patrol areas were defensively weak, leaving it up to the reader to visualize the type of air-capable ship with high performance aircraft that could outfight the F-14. Finally, two articles conjured up the alarming threat to the survivability of the USSR's seaborne nuclear deterrent of each Soviet SSBN being followed constantly by NATO SSNs and sunk immediately at the outbreak of war, presumably before they could launch their missiles.

On the second theme, that of the evidence presented on the priority assigned to the pro-SSBN mission relative to other high priority Soviet naval missions, this topic was referred to by the

^{1/} See the editorial in Naval Digest for June 1971, the Sokha article in the same journal for September 1971, and the Yefremenko article of November 1971, also in Naval Digest.

articles in Naval Digest in September 1971 and January 1972 by Captains First Rank Sokha and Aleshkin, respectively. The sum of the evidence was that at that point of time at the outset of 1972, the pro-SSBN mission was listed as a very close second to the anti-SSBN mission in the first place, with the possible exception of the SSBN-strike mission. And that this latter mission was most unlikely to be in first place was shown, convincingly the author thinks, by the first study in this series, that considering the wartime roles in strategic strike of Soviet SSBNs.

CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of the evidence in these preceding chapters supports the following conclusions:

I. The SSBN-protection mission was added officially to the Soviet Navy's mission structure for any general war no later than May 1962 and in all probability prior to December 1961.^{1/}

II. The SSBN-protection mission probably ranks a close second in priority after the anti-SSBN mission.

III. The Navy conducted a vigorous campaign for more general purpose forces for SSBN protection in 1963-'64 after a lower-key effort from 1961-'63. After a similar low-pitch effort from 1971-'73, a high-intensity campaign was conducted from 1973-'75. This quasi-lobbying for more pro-SSBN forces dropped off sharply at the end of 1975. This supports the twin hypotheses that Soviet naval construction is programmed for ten-year periods and that esoteric advocacy by the various military services to influence the allocation of military budgets formally approved at the Party congresses is tolerated by the Party up to the point that a final decision has been reached.

^{1/}The actual formal assignment date is very likely to have been January 15, 1960 when the IVth Session of the Supreme Soviet appears to have officially added the anti-SSBN mission to the Navy's mission structure in a general codification of military missions and in the new assignment or reassignment of some of them that was made to adjust the USSR's unified military strategy to the "revolution in military affairs" brought about by the advent of nuclear power and the missile and incident to the formation of the Strategic Missile Forces. The evidence for this hypothesis will be provided in the forthcoming 4th study in this series on the ten possible Soviet naval missions for a general nuclear war, that on the anti-SSBN mission.

IV. Gorshkov's energetic, and at times uncharacteristically undiplomatic, advocacy of much larger forces for the pro-SSBN mission may be precisely as he presented it -- to fill what the Navy chief objectively considers a real and urgent requirement. However, an alternative possibility exists that Gorshkov is merely exploiting the high priority accorded to the pro-SSBN mission for protecting the USSR's seaborne deterrent in order to build up the Navy's general purpose forces, particularly the surface forces that tend to be relatively neglected in the USSR's neo-Young School strategy of sea denial in which submarines and aircraft are the "basic" forces. The fact that Gorshkov gave markedly greater attention to surface ships in his pro-SSBN advocacy supports such a hypothesis.^{1/}

V. Soviet ASW submarines, despite the fact that their potential efficacy in the pro-SSBN role has been noted repeatedly by Soviet naval officers, still have not been integrated into the aircraft-surface ship ASW forces for ASW.

VI. Soviet SSBN patrol areas have been described by one Soviet naval officer as "weakly defended" and the U.S. employment of CVAs has been misrepresented by another as largely aimed at providing protection for our ~~SSBNs~~^{SSBNs} -- charges that imply that the USSR should build more and better air-capable ships for pro-SSBN in the open oceans that would carry the high-performance aircraft which, at the least, would enable a Soviet ASW hunter/killer force to protect itself against strikes by CVA aircraft. Here again, however, Gorshkov may quite conceivably be merely

^{1/} Gorshkov's adroit and successful campaign under Khrushchev (against the adamant opposition of Marshal Zhukov and the rest of the Soviet Army marshaldom) to retain the Navy's cruisers which Khrushchev favored scrapping and to obtain more surface ships, primarily for the professed purpose of providing necessary support and "combat stability" to Soviet submarines, has been treated in the author's 1968 book Soviet Naval Strategy, pp. 71-75.

exploiting the USSR's top priority "nuclear criteria" applicable to the pro-SSBN mission to finally obtain for the Navy the attack aircraft carriers for which many senior Soviet naval officers have lusted ever since the early 'twenties.^{1/}

VII. Recurrent Navy advocacy since 1961 of building the large general purpose naval forces that would be required for a strategic campaign against NATO ASW forces for the purported purpose of being enabled to carry out the SSBN-protection mission successfully unquestionably has a compelling logic of its own in view of the advantages enjoyed by the NATO naval forces. Nevertheless, in justifying such large general purpose naval forces for SSBN protection, Gorshkov may be reasonably surmised to be like any other experienced surface sailor of a major navy in appreciating the concomitant advantages that would be accrued by building up large surface forces with inherently multi-mission capabilities.

^{1/} The Soviet Navy's prospects for "selling" the Army marshals and the Party leaders on building any substantial number of such air-capable ships on the strength of the argument that such ships are required for SSBN protection objectively are dimmed by the advent of the Delta Class SSBN with missiles of such range that they can reach the U.S. from launch positions in the Soviet Northern Fleet area in the Barents Sea -- this is particularly true due to the fact that the older Yankee Class SSBN force, for which such improved air-capable ships would be useful for providing protection, would be nearing the end of their service life (and unlikely to be replaced) by the time such virtual CVAs could be built, manned, shaken down, and trained. Moreover, the marshals would be certain to cry "Vulnerable!" at proposals to build such expensive quasi-strike carriers and likely to counter with the more doctrinally palatable proposal simply to build more SSBNs of the Delta or follow-on classes.